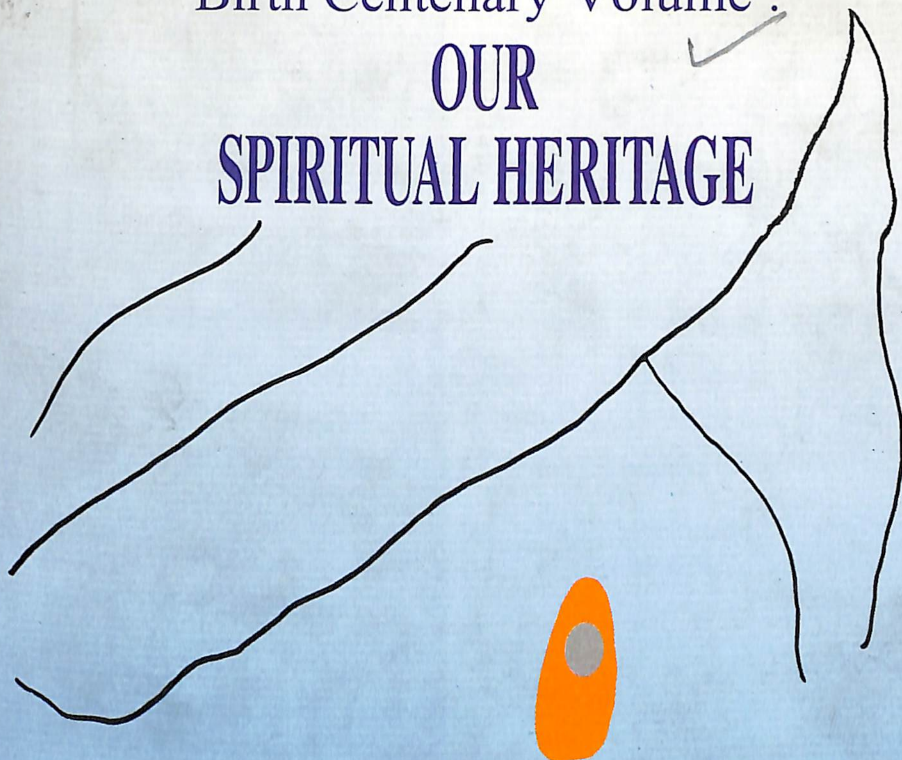
Bhagavaan Gopinathji Birth Centenary Volume : OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

Bhagavaan Gopinathji
Birth Centenary Volume :

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE





Edited by :

A.N. Dhar
Neerja Mattoo

Bhagavaan Gopinathji Birth Centenary
Volume :
OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

1, 2

Bhagavaan Gopinathji Birth Centenary
Volume :

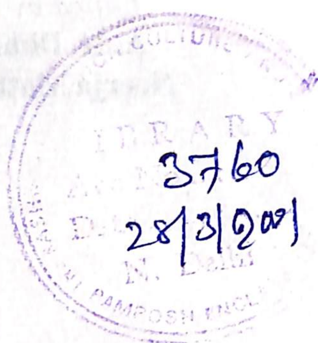
OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

Edited by :

A. N. Dhar
Neerja Mattoo

BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI TRUST
Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi-110048 (India)

First Edition : Delhi, 2000
Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust
Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi-110048 (India)

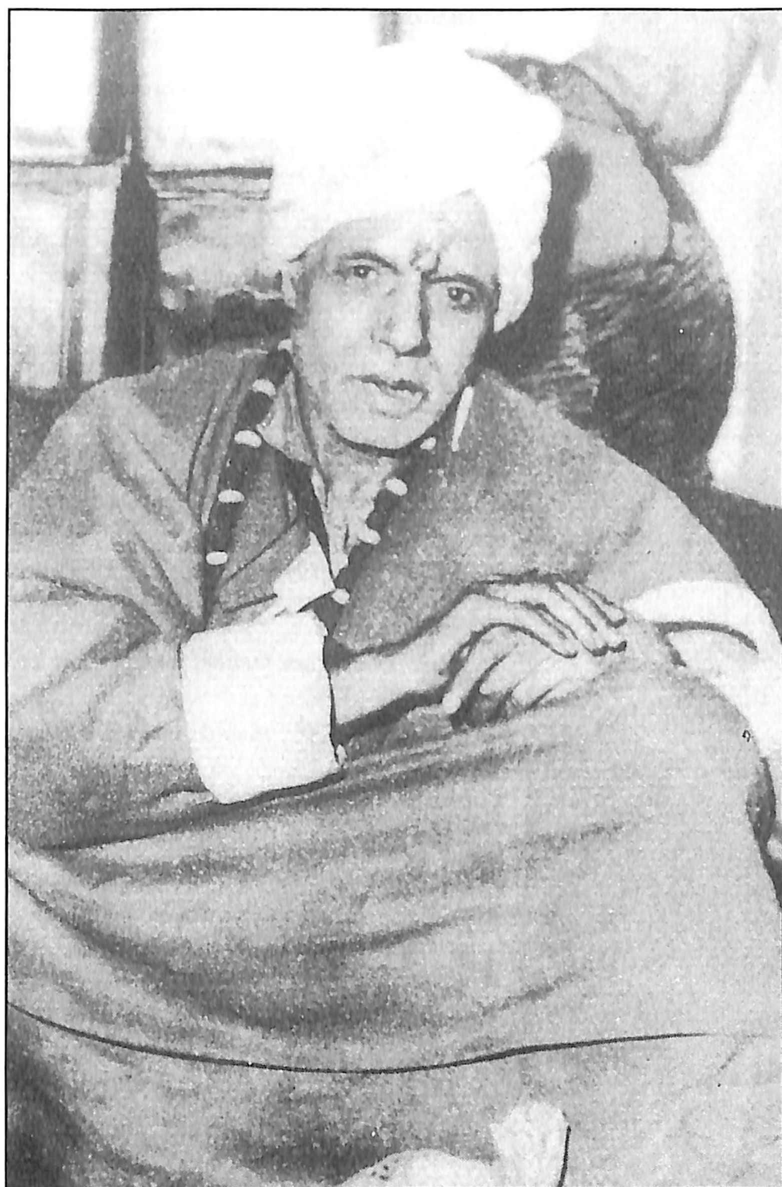


Printed in India
By Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust

(i) Typeset at **DTP People**, Kachi chawni, Jammu

(ii) Printed at Thomson Press

Published by Mr. Pran Nath Kaul, Secretary,
Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust,
Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi - 110048 (India)



Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji
(1898-1968)

Contents

INTRODUCTION

This book is largely a collection of the papers presented on various important occasions during the course of the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Birth Centenary Year celebrations. Through the grace of this saint extraordinary so many scholars, including some very well-versed in Sanskrit and highly qualified as teachers of religious philosophy, participated in the programmes in full measure with stimulating discourses. The papers presented by these scholars made the sessions intellectually and spiritually invigorating, and stirred the audience to positive action. It was felt that the contributions deserved to be shared by a large readership across the globe. Hence this volume.

Relatively speaking, sainthood in Kashmir refuses to fit into a straitjacket of predictable behaviour. Most of our saints have been householders who nevertheless became known and were revered as men of spirituality. The people who came into contact with them have different experiences to narrate . Some were driven to these saints by an irresistible quest for Truth that no material or intellectual progress could satisfy. Others came to them as scoffers who remained to pray as believers. Whatever the degree of an individual Kashmiri's faith, the fact remains that the life of most Kashmiris is dominated by the presence of a saint somewhere at the back of his or her mind, whose aid is invoked whenever the uncertainties of life threaten. Every spot associated with the presence of a *rishi* or a non-materialistically oriented person, is a place to revere, a shrine to which people flock. This is what has happened, very conspicuously indeed, in the case of Bhagavaan Gopinathji and his legacy. His followers have created a space not confined to where he lived on earth in his physical form, but wherever they happen to meet to carry on the good work. In recognition of the Bhagavaan's spiritual stature as a saint, the Govt. of India issued a commemorative postal stamp on him during the birth centenary year. His fame has by now spread to countries abroad, which is appropriate for a person who, even though he was physically located in a house at Srinagar, was believed to be everywhere in the world at once, in a perpetual state of bliss, and part of the cosmic consciousness—one among the Jagad Gurus.

The papers brought together in this book indicate the many ways in which Bhagavaanji influenced and motivated, spiritually, devotees and admirers from different disciplines, to share their experiences and the results of their research relating to our socio-cultural, philosophical and spiritual heritage. The bulk of the papers, which form the first section, were presented at a seminar held at the Abhivav Theatre, Jammu on the 29th of March, 1998; the theme of the seminar was "Our Spiritual Heritage: the Contribution of Saints and Mystical Poets". The second section consists of the lectures delivered by scholars and important personages under the programme of "Centenary Discourses". The third section contains reprints of five select articles, four of which were published in earlier issues of the *Patrika* (religio-cultural journal brought out biannually by the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust). Included with a purpose, these articles throw light on the Bhagavaan's multi-faceted personality, presenting fresh facts and observations going appreciably beyond S.N. Fotedar's initial biographical work on the great saint.

Section I begins with A.N. Dhar's paper, the keynote address, which sets the tone of the seminar. Mentioning briefly what the author perceives as some positive and negative trends in the Contemporary world scene, the paper explains the importance of saints and mystical poets in the rich spiritual heritage of ours, which gives us an identity and which we must preserve at all costs.

Susan Walters, a scholar-devotee at the Ramkrishna Mission, Institute of Culture, Calcutta, after making some inaugural remarks (as the Chief Guest), discusses the relationship between the Vedantic philosophy and the social role of great Indian saints, stressing how both influenced Indian culture. She is at pains to show that relatively speaking, the influence of saints on culture in the west has not been significant enough, providing almost a contrast to the ethos of sainthood in India.

Dr. B.N. Pandit's lecture on *Kashmir Saivism*, that was presented as the Presidential address at the end of the seminar, is a specialized and scholarly piece that goes into the historical origins of the philosophy in question (as the subtitle clearly suggests). The paper is both lucid and compact; it is meticulously documented.

The papers of Prof. S. Bhatt and Triloki Nath Dhar on saints and mystics explore their unique world-view and suggest the relevance of their teaching for all time. Prof. Bhatt's paper focuses on sainthood in Kashmir with particular reference to Bhagavaan Gopinathji. It also dwells briefly on the contribution of Kashmiri mystics to the promotion of peace and harmony in the world, taking into account the impact of their message on the world order of the 21st century. Triloki Nath Dhar's paper is comprehensive in scope—a scholarly presentation offering a historical perspective on saints and mystics in India. The paper traces the growth of various trends and movements, including the Bhakti movement, across centuries from the Vedic times.

Neerja Matto looks at Rupa Bhavani as a poet, appraising the form and content of her mystic utterances, her *vaakhs*. This should invite keener interest of scholars to rediscover this rather obscure Kashmiri saint-poet.

Somewhat different in tone, and perhaps more refreshing for it, is Dr. B.L. Kaul's paper. It sees science and spirituality as not mutually exclusive, but mutually explanatory. When closely allied, as they should, they can solve the problems of existence and enhance the quality of one's physical and spiritual life. Conceived in a similar vein and developed with elaborate care, is Prof. Rageshwari Mattoo's valuable and informative paper, which traces the relationship between Spirituality and Music, the two pillars of our cultural heritage as Indians. She writes knowledgeably about the evolution of Indian Music and Dance forms, as vitally linked with various devotional practices in the country.

Iqbal N. Bakshi's paper is an excellent literary tribute paid to Bhagavaanji as the saint extraordinary 'never to be forgot'. Interspersed with apt allusions to the *Gita*, the paper also quotes memorable lines from Master Zinda Kaul, described as "one of the great poets of all time".

R.K. Langar, in his short and lucid paper, explains what spirituality really means and stands for. Discussing its relevance in our day-to-day social life, he points out that morality has been the back-bone of the Indian spiritual life, nurtured throughout by saints and mystics.

S.L. Shali's paper is the end result of an archaeo-logist's painstaking research. The author discusses the significance of the ubiquitous depiction of the Vedic god Surya in ancient monuments of Kashmir, throwing a flood of light on our past religio-cultural practices.

Prof. Kaushalya Wali's scholarly paper is an exposition of Abhinav Gupta's *Tantraloka*. Well supported by illustrations form the text, in original Sanskrit, she makes this highly mystic work accessible to the novice.

Dr. V.N. Drabu's paper attempts a thematic analysis of Keshavjoo Razdan's *Keshav Praksh*, a versified narrative in Kashmiri, interspersed with devotional lyrics, that is the author's version of the *Radhasvayamvara* story. A classic of Kashmir Bhakti poetry (reminding one of Parmananda's *Radhasvayamvara*), it captures the Kashmiri poet's (Keshavjoo's) vision of the marriage of Radha and Krishna in fine detail.

Philip Simpfendorfer's paper on Bhagavaanji, as a Jagad Guru, is a Christian devotee's personal tribute to the Bhagavaan, whose constant presence is a source of strength to him and, as the author asserts, to everyone who believes in him. This paper reflects an understanding of the unity of all religions.

Prof. B.L. Kaul's paper, presented in Hindi, is a lucid and scholarly introduction to the outstanding Kashmiri poet, Pt. Krishna Joo Razdan. It discusses the poet's great contribution to Kashmiri lyrical and devotional verse—including *lilas* on Sri Krishna, in which he sings tunefully of the great exploits and sports of Krishna as Vishnu incarnate. The paper also throws light on the content of 'Shiva Prani'—the poet's adoration of the divine qualities of Lord Shiva, his chosen deity.

Dr. B.N. Kala's paper in Hindi attempts an analysis and interpretation of Lalla *Vaakh* (Lal Ded's verse-sayings) in the light of the tenets of Kashmir Shaivism. The paper sees Lal Ded as a *Shivayogini* and brings out the universal significance of her massage—that lays stress on achieving inward illumination of the self through purity and contemplation.

P.N. Madhup's learned paper in Hindi focuses on the

cultural significance of folk-literature with special reference to Kashmiri folk tales. It shows, through analyses of several source materials, how one can probe into the collective *psyche* of Kashmiri Pandits and arrive at sound conclusions regarding their religious beliefs and spiritual pre-occupations.

Arjan Dev Majboor's paper, presented in Hindi, discusses the growth and continuity of the *rishi* tradition in India from the Vedic times. He maintains that the *rishi* cult in Kashmir is best represented by Lal Ded and Nunda Rishi and that it has had a tremendous impact on Kashmiri saints including Bhagavaan Gopinathji. In his view, the cult in question is only an offshoot of the main Indian *rishi* tradition.

Section II consists of five papers — presented by Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal', Dr. B.N. Pandit, Prof. Makhanlal Kokiloo, Prof. B.L. Kaul and R.K. Langer under the programme of "Centenary Disourses". Jankinath Kaul's scholarly paper in English on the *Panchadashi,* a less known Sanskrit text, discusses at length how the Vedanta philosophy has been expounded in the text. The author has taken pains to explain some important Vedantic concepts in detail and provided illustrative textual support to his observations.

Dr. B.N. Pandit's paper is a scholarly introduction to *Kashmir Shaivism*, the philosophy that most comprehensively and satisfactorily unravels the enigma of being. While analysing the role played by philosophers like Utpal Dev and Abhinav Gupta in shaping and perfecting Kashmir Shaivism, the paper goes on to explain , for the lay person, how its adherent could realize the highest potential as a spiritually evolved being without having to reject the world of the senses, seeing it as the divine play of the Supreme Spirit of which we all are a part. This philosophy is thus a prescription for perfect harmony between the individual self and the Supreme Self.

Prof. Makhanlal Kokiloo's paper in Hindi attempts a brief exposition of the tenets of Kashmir Shaivism—throwing special light on such concepts as 'Samvit' (supreme consciousness) and how it can be attained through the Guru's grace. He makes particular mention of the three *upayas* (spiritual means) that enable an aspirant to attain self-realization.

Prof. B.L. Kaul's learned paper in Hindi throws light on the multi-faceted personality of the saint-poet Zinda Kaul. It discusses at length his remarkable abilities as a scholar, translator and poet—a lyricist and Bhakti Poet and an intellectual who was very popular as a writer.

The message of the *Gita,* universal and eternally valid, is the theme of R.K. Langar's valuable paper on the *Bhagavad Gita: Its Meaning in life.*

Part III contains the reprints of five useful and informative articles on Bhagavaanji—authored by S.N. Fotedar, H.N. Kaul, Tejnath Dhar, Jagannath Shivpuri and G.N. Raina.

Towards the end we have included write-ups by B.L. Kak, journalist, on Bhagavaanji's "Kargil appearance" on the Tiger Hills (the event was reported upon in three issues of the *Daily Excelsior* published from Jammu.). Other material relating to (i) the observance of Bhagavaan Gopinathji day on the 26th of July 1997 in New Jersey, USA, (ii) Issue of a commemorative postal stamp by the Central Govt. on Bhagavaanji during the centenary year, addresses on the occasion presented by Pran Nath Kaul and Pushkar Nath Kaul and observance of Ashish Day reported upon by Pran Nath Kaul.

We are grateful to Prof. Chamanlal Kaul, Shri Anupam Kaul and Shri Sohan Krishan Khurdi for the valuable help they provided us in compiling and editing this volume.

A. N. Dhar

Neerja Mattoo

Section I

Papers presented at the seminar on
"Our Spiritual Heritage :
Contribution of Saints and Mystical Poets"

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE : THE CONTRIBUTION OF SAINTS AND MYSTIC POETS

—A. N. Dhar

Keynote Address

When we consider our own situation today as human beings, struggling for our survival and aspiring for peace as the helpless victims of terror and violence, we inevitably start pondering over what we should do to preserve our cultural identity and, at the same time, contribute to the promotion of the values we cherish most, that seem to be on the decline. However, we notice both positive and negative trends in the contemporary world-scene : though terror and violence are rampant in many parts of the world, movements concerned with the spiritual well-being of mankind and moves aimed at the resolution of conflicts through dialogue and mutual understanding are also gradually gaining momentum. In this context, I should like to draw the attention of the audience to the prospects of global understanding now growing between various faiths by and by, through what is referred to as "inter-religious dialogue" that has been encouraged through the institution of comparative studies in religion in various universities and other centres of learning in the west and the east alike. Hopefully, through the inter-faith "encounter" the universal essence of religions, that spirituality truly consists in, will crystallize for us and come to the fore, making it possible for intellectuals to perceive how men can live in peace and amity. I must inform the audience that very sound views on the significance and implications of the interfaith dialogue that I have mentioned are beautifully set forth in the illuminating little volume titled *Religion in a New_Key* by the author, M. Darrol Bryant (Willey Eastern Ltd., New Delhi, 1992).

Another healthy trend contemporaneous with the interfaith dialogue is the perceptible change taking place in the thinking and outlook of some outstanding men of science today across the globe in regard to the validity of the spiritual truths that have come down to us from the *rishis* and sages of the Vedic times. Consequently,

the possibility and prospects of an accommodation between science and spirituality do not seem very remote any longer. Modern physics seems coming closer to a philosophical view of the world, akin to the view that our *siddhas* have upheld from ages past. It is heartening to hear men of science now raising their voice against environmental pollution and the destruction of forests and wild life: what our *rishis* said centuries back is being reinforced in effect through the pronouncements of the environmentalists. In this context, I should like to mention two important works I am aware of, titled the *Tao of Physics* and *The Turning Point*, authored by F. Capara, that are being widely talked about alongside other similar books in academic circles these days. I also recall having read the famous book of science titled *The Mysterious Universe* by James Jeans during my college days, which is relevant to mention here. While trying to explain how this universe must have come into being, the author speculates the possibility of "God's Finger" having agitated the primordial matter and transformed it from a state of chaos into the present cosmos. This agitation or movement comes close to what our Shaiva scriptures describe as *"spanda"* or divine pulsation. A full-length study titled *Spandakarikas* edited & translated by Jaidev Singh (Motilal Banarsidas : Delhi, 1980) is devoted to this theme. Swami Muktananda observes about this text in his introductory piece titled 'Blessings' :

> *Spanda Karikas* is one of the important works of Kashmir Saivism. The doctrine of *spanda* is scientific. Modern scientists have discovered that the world was created from the vibration of the first explosion and that the universe is still expanding. Yet so far they have not been able to find out how the first explosion occurred. However, the ancient scriptures of the *spanda* doctrine have always contained the knowledge that this vibration is the *spanda* or throb of the Absolute Reality, the universal consciousness which is called Siva : the world came into existence with the throb of His opening eye.

It is relevant to observe here that Bhagavaan Gopinathji, as we have known and seen Him, was a living, human embodiment of the 'universal consciousness' that Swami Muktanand calls Shiva. I should add, as I feel, it is one thing to read volumes on the nature

of the Divine, talk about transcendence and immanence, drop phrases and words like 'supreme consciousness', 'samvit' and the like, and quite another thing to bask in the glory of a true saint, a yogi *par excellence* reminding us of the veritable Shiva, whom we have had the good fortune of seeing in person as our beloved Bhagavaanji. Some devotees have been all the more fortunate in having served him, sat beside him long and heard him talk in whispers. The impact of a divine personality on the true seeker is surely powerful and instantaneous: it produces tangible results. This is what Shri Fotedar's invaluable biography of the Bhagavaan is essentially about. He has recounted in what ways devotees profited from the human-divine Gopinathji and got thus transformed spiritually. Mere remembrance of the Master today instills in his devotees what we speak of as the 'Bhagavaan Consciousness'. I have watched the spirit of this consciousness as manifest in the sedateness and also the dynamism of the team of workers from the fellow devotees here who have remained occupied throughout with the Bhagavaan's birth centenary celebration. The Bhagavaan consciousness, in whatever form it is experienced, must transform men and women into good human beings, who desire and promote peace and also pray for the well-being of all mankind.

Bhagavaanji was extraordinary in several ways. While he had all the marks of a Kashmiri house-hold saint evident from the dress he wore and the *agnihotra* he performed as a daily ritual (in later years throughout the day, seated close to the *dhooni)*, he deviated from the norm in his unusual fondness for the chillum and his going without food for long periods. He remained a celibate as many other household saints, but didn't turn a vegetarian as some Kashmir Hindu saints do; he partook of mutton and fish like Swami Vivekanand. He was, besides, very fond of the *Guru Gita* as a scriptural text, which only confirms the importance he attached to the position and role of the Guru. Yet he is also reported to have expressed on one occasion that the earnest seeker could turn to the "teacher within" and that a *sloka* of the *Gita* would perform the function of a Guru for him. This shows that in matters spiritual, he was not just conventional but had a mind of his own and the makings of a spiritual genius that culminated in his attaining the state of Sivahood.

In proof of this attainment, I shall furnish corroborative evidence, but I shall first refer briefly to Swami Vivekananda and mention an "encounter" between him and Sri Ramakrishna that is contextually relevant. Swamiji, as we all know, was a great crusader for spiritual values and the most articulate champion of our Vedanta philosophy, that constitutes the essence of the wisdom of India as contained in the *Upanishads* and distilled to us through the *Gita*. While he was essentially a rational thinker and a radical in earnest, and as such least inclined to form-worship to start with, under the impact of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, he came to believe in divine incarnation as a spiritual phenomenon. The fact of the Divine incarnating as a human being was accepted by him as valid when he heard the following words from Ramakrishna's lips just before he attained *mahasamadhi*—a spontaneous answer to the question that had cropped up in his mind regarding the Thakur's avatarhood :

जो राम जो कृष्ण, वही अब रामकृष्ण

"He who was Rama, who was Krishna, is now Ramakrishna".

Under similar circumstances, a Mahatma from outside Jammu and Kashmir came to Bhagavaanji as a visitor with a specific query in his mind as to the spiritual state our Master had attained. The Mahatma made this public after the Bhagavaan read his thoughts correctly and recited the following *sloka* of the *Gita* in answer to the query that had lurked in his mind (the Mahatma's mind) :

न तदभासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावक:
यदग्त्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम।।

That the sun does not illumine, nor the moon, nor the fire ; (for it is the Light of Pure Consciousness).

Having attained It, the Spirit does not return again to the life of *Samsara*. Such is my Supreme Abode.

(Chap. XV, sloka 6.)

This answer from the Bhagavaan convinced the Mahatma of our Master's exalted spiritual state in much the same way as Sri Ramakrishna's words convinced Vivekananda that his Guru was an incarnation of God.

Let me finally revert to the seminar and its theme. The word "mystic" in the subtitle should not mystify anyone here.

Mysticism as a term was much misunderstood in the 19th century in England and other European countries since it suggested a "foggy condition of the mind" then. It has acquired acceptance and got into currency in the present century. To us, Indians, the mystic is no different from the *Yogi* whom we credit with having a direct "encounter" with God. In dogmatic religions, such an encounter is believed to have been the prerogative of only the founders, who are believed to serve as the "link" between God and man. In the realm of scholarship today, we do, however, find books available on Christian Mysticism, Hindu Mysticism, Islamic Mysticism and the like. Here it is appropriate to mention that the Kashmiris, in particular, have inherited a long-standing tradition of spirituality that could be described as mystical in the sense that our poetry is both lyrical in a high degree and packed with spiritual thought. Much of Kashmiri lyric poetry is thus mystical in content, comprehending a fine variety within itself. We notice an intermingling of several streams in it: three distinct but related traditions of i) Kashmir Shaivism, ii) Vendanta/Sufism and iii) the Indian Bhakti movement. Of all our sages, saints and saint-poets, Lal Ded of the 14th century indisputably stands pre-eminent. Her *Vaakhs* are unsurpassable in quality and content ; they have enriched and influenced our cultural heritage in a significant way. The Shaivite, the Vedantin and the Sufi—all pay their homage to her because what she says sounds authentic to the ears of each one of them. I close on that note.

GREAT SAINTS AND VEDANTA : TWO PILLARS OF INDIA'S UNIQUE PHILOSOPHY AND WAY OF LIFE

—Susan Walters

Inaugural Remarks

I consider it a privilege to inagurate this Seminar which is being held to observe the 100th birthday of Revered Bhagavaan Gopinathji. He belongs to the long stream of Indian holy men and women who have their source in the *Vedas*, and especially in the *Vedas*' concluding portion, the *Upanishads*, often referred to as *Vedanta*. These saints are a source of perennial inspiration to spiritual seekers the world over.

We are also honouring today mystic poets and saints for their contribution to India's great spiritual heritage.

A group of devotees of Bhagavaanji, some of whom have actually seen him, and some of whom have not, but have been inspired by his continuing spiritual presence, are carrying out the work he started— spreading the eternal message of India, and putting that message into practice by alleviating the suffering of the poor, the illiterate, and those otherwise in need—seeing the divine in all.

Before I begin my address, let me say that I am very delighted to be here. This statement is not just a formality, but a heartfelt declaration. Fifty years ago, living in mid-America, I fell in love with India, and Kashmir has always seemed to me to typify India's ancient culture. But until I received that kind invitation to speak here, I never thought I would ever be abe to visit this sacred land of saints and the Himalayas.

Main text of the paper

My talk, entitled "Great Saints and Vedanta : Two Pillars of India's Unique Philosophy and Way of Life", will be centred around my contention that the influence of great Indian saints and

of Vedanta Philosophy on Indian culture has been much more profound, pervasive and beneficial than has been the influence of their Western Counterparts on Western Culture. I also plan to point out how these two facets of Indian culture—Sainthood and Vedanta—are making an invaluable contribution to Western philosophy and religion—to the well-being of spiritually famished modern man.

When I first started planning this article, I thought I would emphasize how Vedanta philosophy has given Indian saints a much more universal outlook than saints from other cultures have. But this thesis was nipped in the bud when I looked into Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy* to find quotations to support it. What I got from Huxley was that the saints and sages around the world and across the centuries all sing the same song. For example, who could be more universal and 'Vedantic' than the 18th Century English sage, William Law when he says, 'Though God is everywhere present, yet He is only present to the deepest and most central part of the soul... This depth is the unity, thy eternity... of thy soul ; for it is so infinite that nothing can satisfy it or give it rest but the Infinity of God"[1].

If, as Huxley demonstrates, saints and mystics of the East and the West, the past and present, all say essentially the same thing, then what is unique about Indian saints ?

Perphas it is not so much what they say that is unique ; their uniqueness lies in the fact that they have been revered and their words have been taken to heart by the Indian people. This has not happened with Western saints and sages. There they have not been accepted by their own people as Indian saints have been by Indian people. In the West, saints and sages have been mostly ignored, or even persecuted if they disagreed with church dogma.

As an example of how a recent Indian saint has been received in India, let us take Sri Ramakrishna. Although his actions while he was practising unusual *sadhanas* at the Dakshineshwar Kali Temple seemed laughable to some of the minor employees of the Temple, a few cultured and spiritually advanced persons could rightly judge his great worth. And it was not long before many Calcutta people of all castes and creeds were flocking to see

him and get his blessings. Now, every year hundreds of thousands of people from all over India visit the *ashramas* founded by the Ramakrishna Order to worship this 'mad' man of God. His Vedantic message of the divinity of man and the ideal of God-realization as the supreme goal of life are thus nourishing the spiritual life of millions in India.

I have often wondered what would have happened to Sri Ramakrishna if he had been born in the West. He would probably have been taken to a psychiatrist, and ended his life in an Insane Asylum.

Bhagavaan Gopinathji, who we are honouring today, is another in the long line of saints who have taken their place in the hearts of the Indian people. In the words of J. N. Sharma :

> Bhagavaanji was above all considerations of caste, creed and nationality...people of all creeds would go to see him and he would shower his love and compassion equally on all. Once he said, in answer to a devotee's question, 'Is a Hindu one and a Mulsim another '[2].

Kashmir in fact has produced more than its share of great saints. To mention just a few : Lal Ded, Krishnajoo Razdan, Rupa Bhavani, Swami Rama, Gobind Kaul, Parmananda and Mirza Kak. Some of these have expressed their realizations in beautiful poetry.

But the point I wish to make is; these saints have been accepted and worshipped by many, as have other saints all over India, and the essence of their pure and holy lives has thus entered the stream of Indian life.

Another significant feature of Indian saints is their unconditional acceptance of all people. They have thus broken down the barriers of caste and creed that have too often threatened to create havoc in society. Many Indian saints could be mentioned in this respect—Ramanjua, Ramananda, Kabir, Chaitanya, among a host of others. The 'havoc in society' that has thus been prevented by the saints' influence on Indian people makes one wonder if the terrible religious wars that ravaged Europe for hundreds of years could have been prevented had the saints there been able to similarly influence European people and their rulers. How much less tragic

Western history would have been !

What the saints have brought about in India can be summed up in the words of the distinguished scholar Ananda Coomaraswami :

> The heart and essence of the Indian experience is to be found in the constant intuition of the unity of all life, and the instinctive and ineradicable conviction that the recognition of this unity is the highest goal and the uttermost freedom[3].

> Swami Vivekananda equated this sense of the unity of all life with the awareness of the *Atman*, the divine Self which is the same in all. He said that everywhere in India there is the idea of the spiritual soul, the Atman, which is the receptacle of all power, and that not one Indian philosophy teaches that you can get power or perfection from outside[4].

That great truth has not been generally acknowledged in other parts of the world, especially in the West where religion has been reduced by organized churches to an unthinking acceptance of creeds, and our universities behave as if spirituality were non-existent. As Huxley has said :

> Our current neglect of [William] Law is yet another of the many indications that twentieth century educators have ceased to be concerned with questions of ultimate truth or meaning... and are interested solely in the dissemination of a rootless and irrelevant culture, and the fostering of the solemn foolery of scholarship for scholarship's sake[5].

We see the neglect of great philosophy and genuine spirituality in the way Swami Vivekananda has been ignored by Western churches and Western academic philosophers. This neglect is tragedy for Western youth who are educated in a sterile system where there is nothing but the husks of true knowledge, and no kernel of truth at all.

This brings us to the second pillar of Indian culture, Vedanta.

First, what is Vedanta? Swami Satprakashananda has written, 'Vedanta signifies collectively the Upanishads which teach the supreme truth about the *jiva* and *Brahman*[6]. The supreme truth the Upanishads teach is the essential divinity of man and that in essence he is not different from *Brahman*, the divine Centre and Soul of the universe. They also aver that it is possible to gain complete fulfilment in life by becoming aware of this divinity and our oneness with *Brahman*. When we experience this divine Oneness, we see the world in a new light—as the manifestation of divinity. This is Vedanta.

We have seen in the first part of this lecture how the great saints of India have been accepted by the Indian people and have thus formed the shape of Indian culture. Now we will try to determine how Indian philosophy, especially Vedanta, has similarly influenced Indian culture. These two elements of Indian culture are in fact closely related. The saints have lived in an atmosphere of the broad comprehensive and profound teachings of Vedanta ; and Vedanta itself has received much of its validity from the deep spiritual realizations of the saints. The two have thus cross-fertilized each other.

But let us see how the Vedantic perspective differs from that of the West. One difference is that in modern Western philosophy, the search for Truth and meaning has been through the mind alone. Philosophy has been regarded as a sort of intellectual game. It does not attempt to deal with the vital questions of life : What is the goal of life ? Who am I ? Does God exist ? etc. These questions are left to religion, which is thought to be completely separate from philosophy, at least in the modern age. It should be acknowledged that before the Middle Ages there was no split between philosophy and religion and great scholarly and spiritual men and women—genuine Christian saints—were produced. On the other hand, people had to unquestioningly accept the dictates of the Church.

With the coming of the ideas of Aristotle to Western Europe, however, reason and the scientific outlook began to emerge.

Church authorities, afraid of anything that might break their hold on the minds of the people, persecuted those who freely used their minds, and burned many at the stake. Thus began the rift between religion and philosophy which has continued to this day in the West.

A highly respected European philosopher recently stated that he wanted to keep philosophy completely separate from religion. He is a cultured man, probably at heart a deeply religious man, but like many in the West, the only religion he had contact with was Christianity both Catholic and Protestant and he was afraid of their dogma which many churches still require their members to accept blindly. And so the cleavage between religion and philosophy in the West continues, to the detriment of both. How deplorable the situation is has been perceptively pointed out by the American writer, Richard Schiffman. He says :

> The philosophical dialectic of the West.... is basically analytical. The analystic intellect struggles hard to make sharp distinctions between things,... It works by dividing and conquering, by breaking the universe into logically manageable chunks and then manipulating them according to the dictates of the intellect. The price paid for the convenience of fragmenting the world (as we are only now discovering to our cost) is that we forget that it was ever whole to begin with .... (We believe) that the universe is a collection of loosely bound, independent 'things', whose fundamental truth consists in their separateness and not in their unity with the rest of the cosmos [7]?

May I add that this non-spiritual, ego-centred view, in which the ultimate good is thought to be 'me and mine' at all costs, is responsible for the tragedy of war with all its terrible consequences, and also for the breaking down of social relationships and much of the mental suffering and loneliness that are endemic in the West. The Indian view is fundamentally different. It is a spiritual view, in which there is unity at the centre of all diversity.

> Swami Vivekananda says, 'It is the finding of a Unity towards which we are all going.... Irresistibly we are impelled towards

> that perfection which consists in finding Unity, killing this little self and making ourselves broader and broader.... This is the theme that runs through the whole of Vedanta[8].

The acceptance of this unity, this principle of oneness, thus involves changing our self-centredness to concern and love for others. To quote Swami Vivekananda again, 'There is but one basis of well being, social, political, or spiritual—to know that I and my brother are one' [9]. Most thinking people the world over, including those in the West, would probably agree with this statement. The problem is, if your basic way of thinking is self-centred and materialistic, if deep inside your heart is ringing the *mantram*, 'Me first, me first, me first' instead of 'I am He, I am He', you will never be able to feel that you are at one with all. The concern for all, the giving up of our private pleasure and possessions for the good of others, can be generated only in those whose philosophy of life is founded on spiritual principles such as are found in Vedanta—the divinity of man, the supreme importance of self discipline, the Oneness at the centre of all creation.

One can see from this analysis that Vedanta goes far beyond Western philosophy. Its depth, its universality and its rational approach appeal to people of all religions, all nationalities.

Let us glance briefly at three of India's other Vedantic ideas and see how they differ from those of the West.

First, intellectual knowledge of all branches of learning, including the physical sciences, philosophy itself, even the study of the Vedas, is to be regarded as inferior to the knowledge of *Brahman*, the realization of the Self, which is the supreme, the highest knowledge. And this can be attained only through religion. Thus religion which Western philosophers would like to ban from their field of study is the discipline which leads man to the highest knowledge.

Second, although it is true that religion is the highest of all disciplines and leads to a state beyond the mind, the same faculty of reason that is applied to science should be applied to it. In the words of Swami Vivekananda, 'If religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was all the time useless, unworthy superstition,

and the sooner it goes the better'[10]. A religion founded on Vedantic principles can be rationally explained. Western philosophers seem never to have examined this kind of religion in which the greatest latitude is given to reason.

And third, the Infinite which is found only within. The *Katha Upanishad* tells us a hard truth, that our eyes have been created to look outward, thus we never see the glory of the divine that is within[11]. We are bound by the attractions of Maya. But a few rare souls turn their sight inward and find blessedness— the Infinite. Swami Vivekananda tells us that what we find there 'is not the infinite of space, but the real Infinite, beyond space, beyond time.... Such is the world missed by the Occident.... Their minds have been turned to external nature and nature's God'[12]. He tells the West, and all of us, 'Look within yourself and find the truth that you had [forgotten]'[13].

To summarize: Vedanta, a pillar of Indian culture, differs essentially from Western philosophy and thought in that it goes to the root of the matter in dealing with what should be the most urgent problems for philosophers, such as 'What is the goal of life ? Does God exist ? Who am I ? etc.' As long as Western philosophers continue to ignore the religious and spiritual aspect of knowledge, they will never be able to answer these questions. The value of Vedanta to the world thus lies in the eternal vital truths handed down to mankind by India's ancient seers which alone can give to the world something it badly lacks and needs—a deep and comprehensive view of life in all its dimensions, and hence answers to man's most urgent questions.

And the great Indian saints and realized souls, another pillar of Indian culture, are both the parent and offspring of the Vedanta Philosophy—they have nurtured this all-embracing and profound philosophy and have in turn been nurtured by it. Their influence on the Indian people has been out of all proportion to their numbers. Their pure and holy, God-centred lives are perfect examples of what a person can become—completely honest, loving and spiritually fulfilled.

It is encouraging to see that more and more people in the West are looking to India for its Vedanta Philosophy, and for its

living examples of what we are meant to be—pure and perfect men and women—and this without having to accept any dogma or religious teaching blindly. The debt the world owes to India for these and other gifts can never be adequately repaid.

REFERENCES

1. Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, Harper and Brothers, N. Y. 1945, p. 2.
2. J. N. Sharma, *Patrika*, July, 1997, p. 2.
3. Ananda Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*. Asia Publishing house, Calcutta, 1948. p. 22.
4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Advaita Ashrama, Culcutta, 1990, III, p. 159.
5. *Perennial Philosophy* op cit., p. 177.
6. Swami Satprakashananda, *Methods of knowledge*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1974, p. 307.
7. Richard Schiffman, *Sri Ramakrishna A Prophet for the New Age*, Ramakrishna Mission, Insitute of Culture, Calcutta, 1991, p. 151.
8. *Complete Works*, op. cit., VI p. 4, 5, 6.
9. Ibid., VIII, p. 350.
10. Ibid., I, p. 367.
11. *Katha upanishad*, II, I, 1.
12. *Complete Works*, op. cit., I, p. 500.
13. Ibid.

KASHMIR SAIVISM : ITS ANCIENT HISTORICAL TRACES

—Dr. B. N. Pandit

Kashmir Saivism is, in fact, the most ancient and well-known school of practical philosophy which propounds a highly nondualistic and theistic absolutism as its main metaphysical and ontological principle. This school of practical philosophy, having attained later a highly evolved academic development in the Valley of Kashmir, between the eighth and twelfth centuries A.D., was given its name by some research scholars of the present age. However, the name earlier given to it by its ancient authors was just the school of *Tryambaka*, called *Tryambaka-mathika*, because, according to tradition, it was given a fresh start in the present age of *Kali-yuga* by *Tryambakaditya*, a disciple of the sage *Durvasas*. *Madhavacarya* of the fourteenth century called it *Pratyabhijna-darsanam*, because it aims finally at the attainment of *pratyabhijna*, correct recognition of the real character of the Self. Many scholars call it *Trika* philosophy becasue the *Trika* system of yoga is considered in it as the highest type of practical *sadhana*, aimed at self-recognition. Such practice has left its traces in the sources of Indian history from the prehistoric ages to the present time. Through a discussion on the clear evidence of Saivism found in some very ancient archaeological and literary sources of Indian history, this paper is meant to throw light on the constant prevalence of the practice of this form of Saivism in India, right from the ancient prehistoric ages upto the historical ones.

In addition to its prehistoric origin, the nondualistic Saivism has remained constantly prevalent in some rare traditions of preceptors and disciples, throughout millennia of history. It was very often prevalent in some lines of yogins, many among whom were householder sages, like *Yajnavalkya* and some were ideal monarchs, like *Janaka*. From time to time it has left some clear traces of its prevalence in some definite sources of the history of India, right from the prehistoric ages, down to the medieval periods, as will be shown below.

(i) The most ancient but sufficiently clear evidence of the prevalence of its practical Saiva yoga can be seen in the remains of the Indus-valley-civilization, belonging to the third millennium B.C. Such evidence is present in the archeological remains like these : realistically designed phallic figures of lingas and yogins, an idol of Lord Pasupati Siva, baked clay models of Mother Goddess, terracotta figures of yogins in *samadhi* and, above all, the bust of a yogin in a Saiva yoga posture, with his eyes half shut and half open and his sight falling mildly towards the tip of his nose, such elements being similar to the well-known description of the *Sambhavi-mudra* of Kashmir Saivism[1].

It may be mentioned here that these yoga practices, appearing to have been highly popular among the ancient people of India, were not known to *Vedic Aryans* in the ancient ages, as the use of the word *'yoga'*, in the sense of yogic practice, does not occur anywhere in *Rgveda*. The most ancient and rather a brief reference to 'yoga' was made very late in the *Katha-Upanisad* as *'yogavidhim cakrtsnam'*. A clear description of yoga practice cannot be found in any Vedic text prior to a Saivite metrical *Upanisad* known as *Svetasvatara*. Such a thing indicates that yoga practice, the very back-bone of Kashmir Saivism, must have been definitely prevalent among people living in India in the pre-Vedic and even in the early Vedic ages, especially in the Indus Valley part of ancient India in the third millennium B.C. and may have been properly picked up by early Vedic Aryans from that time, sometime during the early Epic period of the Indian history.

(ii) Coming to the Vedic period of our history, we can find two hymns in Book X of *Rg-veda* which describe vaguely the principle of the nondualism that has enjoyed a high popularity in the Saivism of Kashmir. We can find definite traces of such monism in these two hymns. One of these is the *Purusasukta* (R.V. X 90),

which describes the whole phenomenal existence, including even all the classes of Indian people as a whole, as the outward manifestation of the single and basically existent reality, termed *Purusa*, the divine, pure and infinite consciousness of Saivism, though polytheism was still the popular belief of the Vedic Aryans. Another hymn was uttered by a young girl named *Vak* (or Vac) a daughter of the *rishi* named Ambhrna (R.V.X-125). It presents a wonderful description of the actual realization of the basically correct nature and character of the Self, realized by her as the all-inclusive and all-pervasive infinite I-consciousness, giving rise to the emanation of all beings like gods and the whole phenomenal existence. It also presents a wonderful description of the Self, realized by the girl *Vac* as the all-inclusive pure and single consciousness, possessing all divine powers and agreeing thus with the metaphysical and ontological character of the single and absolute theistic reality, worked out later in Kashmir Saivism as *Parama Siva*.

(iii) Coming down to the Epic period of the history of ancient India, we can find a detailed expression of the Yogic practices of Saiva monism of Kashmir in the *Bhagavadgita*, especially in its sixth chapter[2]. It throws full light on the essentials of *Sambhavayoga* of the Trika system of the school of Saivism, the system concerned being its most important back-bone. The eleventh chapter, being more beautiful in its poetic style, suggests the character of the acutal realization of the absolute theistic nature of the Self, developed later philosophically in the works on Kashmir Saivism. The *Gita* says it clearly that such a superior system of yoga was prevalent in the traditions of the ancient royal sages[3] like *Janaka*[4] who, according to the *Upanisads*, was a patron of Siva yogins like *Yajnavalkya*.

(iv) The *Mahabharata* narrates an episode in accordance with which the sage Durvasa imparts the yoga

knowledge of such Saivism to Lord Krsna[5]. The Epic says in clear terms that the sage, having imparted this yoga to him, did warn him about the vulnerability of the soles of his feet to weapons, and that the Lord remembered the warning when he was hit in one of his soles by the arrow of a hunter which was shot at him mistakenly[6]. This episode hints toward the fact that the yoga system described in the *Bhagavadgita* must have been based on the teachings imparted to the Lord by sage Durvasa and come down to the writer of the Epic through tradition.

(v) Moving ahead to the post-epic period of history, the age of our lawbooks, the Smrti of Yajnavalkya refers to yoga as a means of self-realization[7] (III-8) and depicts the method of *Sambhavi yoga-mudra*, along wiht its esotericism in the same chapter (199-203) in sufficient detail, that agrees with such a *mudra*[8], as depicted in the Trika system of Saivism and as described in the same manner in *Svacchanda-Tantra* (IV—365 to 367) (स्वच्छन्दतन्त्र), an important scriptural work on *Kashmir Saivism.*

(vi) In the period of classical literature, corresponding with the earlier centuries of the Christian era, we find a highly beautiful depiction of *Sambhavi yoga-mudra* in the third canto of the *Kumara-sambhava* of *Kalidasa*[9].(III—44-50)

(vii) *Avadhuta-gita*[10] mentions several technical terms of Saiva yoga; e.g. *Sambhava Sakta, Anava, Pinda, Padastha* etc. without explaining or even mentioning their practical essence.

(viii) Sankaracharya quotes a lengthy lecture on yoga, delivered by the sage *Yajnavalkya* to *Gargi*, in his commentary on the hymns of *Svetasvatara-Upanisad*, depicting yoga and starting with the words *—trir unnatam sthapaya samam sarvam* (Sve. Up.II—2-8)[11], but does not, somehow, mention the source of the questions. This lecture by Yajnavalkya depicts at

length, with all its essential elements, the *Sambhavi-yoga-mudra*, along with aids to it, like *asana, pranayama* and some secret elements of the *mudra* concerned. Besides, the "nari-sodhana-pranayama," (नारी शोधन प्राणायाम:) useful in the practice of such Sambhavi mudra, has also been depicted in the quoted lecture of the sage. (see *Gita* Press edition, pp. 137-146.)

(ix) The same Sambhavi yoga, along with *pranayama* and a secret *mudra* finds a clear depiction in *Svacchanda Tantra* (IV-365-67) as mentioned above.

(x) The same Sambhavi yoga-mudra, along with all its aids, was imparted by the sage Durvasas to Acharya Amrtavagbhava in sufficient detail and has been depicted by him in his *Siddhamaharahasya*[11]. (S.M.R. VI—21to23)

(xi) It is highly probable that Bhartrhari may also have been a practitioner of such yoga. How could he have or why should he have, otherwise, meddled with the philosophical topic of *Sabdabrahman*, while starting to write on sentences and words in accordance with Sanskrit grammar? It is only through the efforts of the masters of Saivism and not any grammarians, that his theory of *Sabdabrahman* has been satisfactorily explained in some works on Kashmir Saivism, especially in *Swadrsti* and *Isvarapratyabhijna*[12] *(I-V-12,13).*

All the facts mentioned are the traces of practical Kashmir Saivism, lying in the sources of history cited. All the historical evidence of the practice of the Saiva yoga of the Trika system of Kashmir Saivism proves the fact that this philosophy, along wiht its esoteric aspect of the highest practical yoga, has been prevalent in India, right from the prehistorical ages, but has remained confined only to some worthy practitioners throughout the millenniums of the past history of India. This fact of history has been mentioned in some Saiva Agamas and clear light was thrown on it in detail in the ninth century by *Somananda* in his *Sivadrsti*, the first elaborate philosophical treatise written on it. (S.D. VII—107-122).

Sage Durvasas has all along been accepted and mentioned as the original teacher of Kashmir Saivism. He should not be taken as a mythical figure, as he has been depicted in many works in Sanskrit literature and even in some passages of the Epic. He is actually living still in a divine form. A definite evidence of such a thing is the fact that he appeared before a young Sanskrit scholar at Varanasi at the dead of night in 1920 and imparted to him the highest practicial method of the *Sambhava-upaya* of Kashmir Saivism, along with aids to its practice including *nari-sodhana pranayama*, a special *mudra*, etc. helpful to success in its practice. Thereafter of regular practice in this yoga, the scholar concerned attained direct experiences of some highly profound principles of Kashmir Saivism, without reading any books on the subject. As a result, he started writing on it. After a few years he left Varanasi and became a monk. In the course of his wanderings he came to Kashmir. There he got an opportunity to study the works of teachers like *Bhatta Kallata, Somananda, Utpaladeva, Avbhinavagupta* and others and was immensely satisfied to find his personal experience of the truth being in agreement with those of the masters of Kashmir Saivism. In the course of his roamings he composed several works on Saivism and some of them were published under his pen-name Amrtavagbhava. The highly important works form his pen are : *Atmavilasa, Vimsatika-sastram, Siddhamaharahasyam,* and *Mandakrantastotram.* His views on philosophy are now known as Neo-Saivism.

APPENDIX OF QUOTATIONS

1. Ardhod-ghatita locanah sthira-manah nasagra-datta lasanah.
2. Samankaya-sivo-grivam dharayan acalam sthirah etc.

(Bh.G. VI-13,14).

Sampraksya nasikagram svam disascanava lokayan............................

....

Atma samstham manah krtvi na kimcidapi cinstayet (Ibid. VI-25).

3.......................imam rajarsayo viduh (Ibid. IV-27).

4. Karmanaiva hi sam siddhim asthita janakadayah (Ibid III - 20).

5. Durvasasah prasadat te yat tada madhusudana;
Avaptamiha vijnanamtan me vyakhyatum arhasi (M.Bh. XIII-144-1).

6. Yavadetad viliptam te gatresu Madhu-sudana;

Ato mrtyu-bhayam nasti yavad iccha tavacyuta.
Natu padatale lipte kasmatte putrakadya vai;
Naitan me priyam ityeva sa ma prito bravit tada.
(Ibid. XIII-144-38-39).

7. a. Ananya-visayam krtva mano-buddhi-smrtindriyam;
Dhyeya atma sthiti yiasau hrdaye dipavat prabhuh. (Y.Smr. III-111).
b. Urustho-ttana-caranah sarye nysyattaram karam;
uttanam kimcidunnamya mukham vistabhya corasa.

....

Tatu dhyeyah sthito yasau hrdaye dipavat prabhu. (Ibid. 198-201).
8. Karanam tu tatah krtva laksanam tasya vai srnu;
jihva tu taluke yojya kimcid urdhvam na samsprset, etc.
(Sv. T. IV-365-367).

Note : Karanam is an essential aid to yoga practice. it is termed as *divyam karanam*, a higher variety of Karanayoga of the *Trika* system.

9. From :
Par yanka-bandhas thiva-purvakayam; Rjvayatam sannamitv bhayamsam.

....

yamaksaram ksatravido vidus tam Atmanam almanyavaloka yantam.
(K.S. III-44-50).

10. Na sambhavam, saktam athanavam va ;
Pindam ca rupam ca padadikam va (Av. G. II-33.).
11. Padmasanam adhisthaya sama-sarvanga-vigraham;
Parasparopari dhrtan Kasau krtvankagavubhau.
Nivata-dipavatisthan kriya-jnanaisnah samah;
Agrhnannatyajan nityam svatmanam Sambhumiksate
(S.M.R. VI-22).

12. Citih pratyavamarsatma para vak svarasodita;
Svatantryametan mukhyam tad aisvaryam paramatmanah.
Sa sphuratta mahasatta desa-alavisesini;
Saisa sarataya prokta hrdayam paramesthinah. (I.Pr. I-V-13,14).

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE : REMEMBERING BHAGAVAAN GOPI NATH AND OTHER SAINTS

—S. Bhatt

The birth centenary of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath of Kashmir provides us an occasion to reflect on our spiritual heritage to draw strength to face the problems of contemporary society and be ready to face the 21st century. It is also a time to pay homage to the saints of Kashmir who have interpreted our spiritual philosophy from time immemorial.

Importance of Bhagavaan Gopinath

Writing on the teachers of religion (as distinguished from the philosophers), Swami Vivekananda makes an important observation on their influence on world society. He says : "Compare the great teachers of religion with the great philosophers. The philosophers scarcely influenced anybody's inner man, and yet they wrote most marvellous books. The religious teachers, on the other hand, moved countries in their life time. The difference was made by the personality. In the philosopher it is a faint personality that influences; in the great prophets it is tremendous. In the former we touch the intellect, in the latter we touch life."[1]

Swami Vivekananda thus makes it explicit as to why we remember saints like Bhagavaan Gopi Nath. These saints kindle in our minds God-consciousness which is useful for the peace and tranquillity of society. Mr. Pran Nath Kaul in his editorial in an important issue of the *Patrika* has written on the need to promote Bhagavaan-consciousness. He writes : "In order to attain this consciousness, we need to rediscover our innate divinity, and cultivate in ourselves a sense of the abiding spiritual values that have come under a cloud in consequence of the growing materialism and disbelief."[2]

Developing spiritual consciousness is therefore the need of our times. Bhagavaan Gopinath created in us an intense desire for God-consciousness — to experience the vision of God, and seek truth and enlightenment.

---

1. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* vol. II, p.15.
2. See Pran Nath Kaul, 'Editorial', *Patrika,* Vol. III, July, 1997.

In the face of global terrorism and violence, man is called upon to seek freedom from anarchy. Kashmir in particular has recently undergone turmoil. People have lost their spiritual moorings because of the cult of violence. The mystic consciousness of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath can reform society in Kashmir. This consciousness based on harmony is reflected in the history of Kashmir, in its ethos and culture. In Kashmir great saints and mystics, both Hindu and Muslim, including Lalleshwari, Nund Rishi, Rupa Bhavani have interpreted the mystic view of life. Bhagavaan Gopi Nath conforms to that tradition of mystic vision during the 20th century.

Kashmiri Mystics and Scientific World Order

We live in an interdependent world because of modern communication and because of an integrated global culture. Even spiritual consciousness is becoming integrated. I have attempted to describe the role of Kashmiri mystics like Bhagavaan Gopi Nath for the development of harmony and world order in an issue of the *Patrika*[3]. The mystics promote harmony in society, and harmony with nature. I have said: "Man is also a part of nature. Mysticism helps us understand nature better. Bhagavaan Gopi Nath attempted to discover the mysterious. Elevation of self to super-conscious level enables seers look into the mysteries of nature"[3].

Therefore mysticism and world order are interconnected. A peaceful and scientific world order follows from a mystic view of life, which helps combine spiritual beliefs and provide a holistic view of the universe. Thus a synthesis of knowledge of all religions is made possible by mysticism. Indeed, the modern world is in search of a dialogue to combine and harmonise all religious philosophies so that mankind lives in harmony and love.

Fortunately, there is hope as the philosophy of science has in recent period moved away from a mechanistic view of science to the consciousness school in which scientific and spiritual perceptions are merging.

Leading scientists like Fritjof Capra and Iliya Pregogine, a Nobel laureate in Physics, have focussed our attention on a

3. See S. Bhatt, 'Bhagavaan Gopinath and the contribution of Kashmiri Mystics to the world Order of the 21st Century', *Patrika* Vol. VIII, July, 1997.

new way of observation of the world. Capra has convincingly provided a scientific interpretation to the Hindu philosophy, put forth among others by Bhagavaan Gopi Nath. Capra writes: "Being free from the bond of Karma means to realise the unity and harmony of all nature, including man, and to act accordingly."[4]

Referring to the role of mysticism for the furtherance of unity of mankind, Capra elucidates : "Although the various schools of Eastern mysticism differ in many details, they all emphasize the basic unity of the universe which is the central feature of their teachings. The highest aim for their followers—whether they are Hindus, Buddhists or Taoists—is to become aware of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things, to transcend the notion of an isolated individual self and to identify themselves with ultimate reality." Capra continues, "The emergence of this awareness known as enlightenment is not only an intellectual act but is an experience which involves the whole person and is religious in its ultimate nature. For this reason, most Eastern philosophers are essentially religious philosophers."[5]

Capra has established that the new modern philosophy of science which is based on unity and interrelatedness has finally rejected the mechanistic view, with the emphasis that all natural phenomena are ultimately interconnected.[6]

Kashmir's mysticism, based on unity of mankind and propagated by Lalleshwari, Nund Rishi, Bhagavaan Gopi Nath and others represents therefore the new religion of man and a new philosophy for world order. The 21st century is all set to develop the unity of mankind with this philosophy that will shape a creative and peaceful international society. After all, mankind is fed up with the global violence. It wants to do away with the fragments of the past. Kashmiri heritage of composite culture and spiritual consciousness is a part of world heritage. The occasion of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath's birth centenary therefore provides us an important water-shed to look back and forth in history and chalk out a new programme for a future world order based on a synthesis of global science and Eastern mysticism. The life and times of Bhagavaan Gopinath have become important for our study, and for that of mankind.

4. See F. Capara, *The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism. 1975, p.95.*
5. F. Capra, Ibid., p.23.
6. Ibid., pp. 302-303

Modern science has provided new lustre to the Vedic vision of the universe. The *Vedas* expounded by Kashmiri sages and other Indian seers give a new emphasis to world harmony. As Dr. L. M. Singhvi writes: "The *Vedas* enshrine an inherited remembrance of the primordial revelations, the inner experience of the sages and seers. Indeed each Vedic hymn is a landmark in the spiritual odyssey of Man, celebrating at every step humanity's ceaseless quest for the True, the Good and the Beautiful. The Vedic hymns exude the glowing awareness of pure consciousness and the elevating effulgence of bliss."[7] Kashmiri mystics have made a very important contribution to world society. Their spiritual experiences have created a new consciousness of harmony and human happiness. Modern science when blended with the spiritual doctrines of Kashmiri mystics will result in a new paradigm for world order. A new civilisation will emerge out of the conflicts of the present period.

Spiritual Writings on Bhagavaan Gopi Nath

Various scholars have written on Bhagavaan Gopi Nath and brought out the essence of his spiritual life and teachings. It was Swami Vivekananda and his colleagues who brought to the world the spiritual enlightenment of Shri Ramakrishna. Similarly, the followers of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath are making an attempt to piece together his spiritual philosophy. I am sure the forthcoming volume on Bhagavaan Ji will present a consolidated history on the subject and help mankind realise the Bhagavaan's essential teachings.

From among some available writings, I refer to the following literature on Bhagavaan Gopi Nath which may be studied with interest. Professor J. N. Sharma, an erudite scholar of English, was a disciple of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath having remained in contact with him for twenty two years. He has translated the *Guru Gita*, published under the title **The Hymn to the Guru.** He says that Gopi Nath Ji is a *Jagadguru*, meaning thereby a world spiritual teacher. Bhagavaanji read and recited the *Guru Gita* daily. The teachings of Bhagavaanji are summarised by Prof. Sharma as follows : Bhagavaanji says that all that exists is God incarnate and **Om** is its root. Meditating on **Om** removes

the ego. Realisation of God can come by discretion, hard work, the Guru's guidance and surrender to him. One should act upon what the four *Vedas* and *shastras* lay down. Maya, the delusion, can be overcome by non-attachment. Lust should be avoided to attain spiritual bliss. One should think of Brahman as a tree and sit on any one of its branches, goal is the same.

The importance of Guru for God realisation is stressed in stanza 74 of the Hymn. It reads : "I regularly bow to the Guru who is bliss incarnate and (so) bestows bliss (on his disciples) ; and who is (ever) joyous, knowledge incarnate, self-realised, the greatest of the yogis, worthy of being worshipped and a physician to those suffering from the disease of the world", (*i. e.,* He who can show the way to liberation). Again the Guru is eulogized in stanza 155 : "I meditate on the Guru, who, having harmonized all philosophies, is free from doubt and practises penance at a lonely place; the Guru is indeed Ishwara (God)." The recitation of a mantra is stressed in stanza 171 as follows: "By repeating the great mantra regularly, one is saved from the ill effects of evil dreams and benefitted by the effects of good ones ; one always enjoys peace ; even barren women are blessed with a long life, sound health, affluence and many sons and grandsons ; one lives in comfort, free from disease, suffering, fear, impediments and difficulties ; all sufferings and perils are averted ; and one achieves the four goals of human life, viz., religious merit, wealth, the fulfilment of one's desires and liberation".

Thus the guru is accorded an eminent place in the ***Guru Geeta*** which Bhagavaan Gopi Nathji read so regularly in the early stages of his spiritual odyssey.

By far the more important and comprehensive work on Bhagavaan Gopi Nath is the biographical study by Mr. S. N. Fotedar, edited by Prof. J. N. Sharma and published by the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust in 1974 (rev. 1991). This book has fifteen chapters and a list of devotees attached at the end. For disciples the world over, this book should give a graphic picture of Bhagavaan Gopi Nathji's life and spiritual contribution to the mankind. Writing on his philosophy, Fotedar says that Bhagavaanji

was mostly absorbed in the Supreme. He seldom spoke. He gazed at the world when he smoked his "chillum", with his eyes turned towards the sky. From the sources that Mr. Fotedar could gather together, it was clear that Bhagavaanji practised *Sanatana Panchanga Upasana* in which Maha Ganesha, the Divine Mother, Lord Narayana, Lord Shiva and the Sun God are prominent. His first ideal was Sharika Bhagavati. He had the *Saakshaatkaara* of the Divine Mother before he was 27 years old. This was the beginning of his higher spiritual attainments.

Before Bhagavaanji left his mortal coil, he uttered the word "Om Namah Shivaya". Fotedar writes that Bhagavaanji's philosophy was akin to the Trika doctrine of Advaita Shaivism of Kashmir, with emphasis on will and action. His philosophy harmonises the doctrine of Man, the Universe and the 36 *tattwas*. Fotedar sums up the Trika doctrine thus : "Its primary purpose is to explore the nature of the Reality and the experiences gained from the regular system of practice for the exploitation of thought and the oneness of the individual soul with the universe, through improved materialism." Fotedar explains further : "Though there are many principles common to the Vedantic and Shaiva philosophies, *Shakti* is special to the latter. The Shaivites believe that the universe is created, preserved and dissolved in Shiva alone. In Vedanta, it is Maya alone that is responsible for creating the Universe, the whole of which is delusion."

There are other spiritual leanings of Bhagavaanji recorded by Mr. Fotedar. Bhagavaanji said to Fotedar Sahib once that *Atman* cannot be realised by *Vichara* alone but by *upasana*. Discarding ego (ahamkara) is as good as concentrating on *Omkar*. Bhagavaanji had reached the Supreme state of bliss as is stated in stanza 6 of chapter 15 of the *Gita* which Bhagavaanji recited to let a devotee know his (Bhagavaanji's) state of spiritual evolution. Bhagavaanji was not keen on the awakening of *kundalini* in the spinal cord by his devotees. Mr. Fotedar says that once a photograph of Ramakrishna Paramhamsa was shown to Bhagavaan Gopinathji who said he was a *purusha* and asked a devotee to fix the photograph on the wall along with those of other gods. Writing about the vision of Bhagavaanji, Fotedar records : "As has been stated previously, Bhagavaanji was a

Tattva-jnaani who, with his intuitional eye (the third eye, or, *jnaana netra)*, could see the nature and colour of the elements and their divisions and sub-divisions. Those chosen by him for a higher degree of realisation could, according to their individual capacities, be intuitively guided by him, or directed to blow continuously into fire, or, in other ways, to gain some knowledge of some of the elements." Bhagavaanji, says Mr. Fotedar, did not dissuade anyone from pursuing his/her *upasana*. Nor did he suggest an ideal directly, but he did it indirectly. Once a devotee enquired who his Guru was, Bhagavaanji replied (without furnishing a direct answer to the question) that the *Bhagavad Gita* could be one's guru. This message of Bhagavaan Gopi Nathji that the *Gita* can be one's Guru should be helpful to the millions of his devotees spread in India and outside India. It should be helpful to the Kashmiris, particularly those living overseas, who may not have the facilities of selecting a Guru as such. Bhagavaanji has said that for God-realisation all that is needed is one's efforts and the Guru's grace. According to Mr. Fotedar, Bhagavaanji never advised his devotees to give up household or wife and children. He said a worldly man can be a man of dispassion (vairagya). However, celibacy was important for intense *sadhana*. Above all, Bhagavaanji was keen to change and improve the environment with his spiritual grace. He was keen to improve global society and spread enlightenment.

Mr. Fotedar has produced a masterpiece by explaining the life of this great spiritual seer of Kashmir for which future generations should be grateful. Mr. Fotedar has been himself a witness to the events and story of the life of Bhagavaan Gopi Nathji. Much of Bhagavaanji's philosophy of nature may find adequate response from the leading scientists of the world who are engaged in research on eastern mysticism and on the human mind and perception in general. Here is a wide-open area for civilization to understand the mysteries of nature by interpreting Bhagavaanji's spiritual philosophy. Moreover, the influence of Bhagavaanji on the peace and tranquillity of environment is very much needed in Kashmir to root out parochialism and fundamentalism that have upset the soothing effect of spirituality on human society and environment.

Yet another brilliant scholar and educationist Prof. Kashi Nath Dhar has brought out a book with the title "Bhagavaan Gopi Nathji of Kashmir : The Saint of All Times", published by the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust in 1981. The book has an extensive foreword by S. N. Fotedar. It traces the spiritual history of Kashmir, discusses the essence of the *Upanishads,* and Bhagavaan Gopi Nath's spiritual philosophy. Correspondence in the form of letters written to and received from scholars and devotees, in India and abroad, on Bhagavaanji's spiritual philosophy is faithfully recorded in the book. Special mention must be made of the contribution of Philip Simpfendorfer from Australia who has established a Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ashram in Australia (address Box 78, P.O. Glenbrook 2773, N. S. W. Australia). Letters written to Mr. Pran Nath Kaul, Secretary of Bhagavaanji Trust have been meticulously reproduced to provide a glimpse of the world-wide interest in the spiritual life of Bhagavaanji. The book also has some random reflections by the late Justice S. N. Katju, Major R. K. Raina, Madhvaji Kaul of Sathu, all saintly persons who have provided to us knowledge about Bhagavaanji, his miracles and spiritual contribution. In chapter 2 Prof. K. N. Dhar has dealt at length with the spiritual development of Bhagavaanji and his approach to salvation of mankind and of an individual. Prof. Dhar has in a very scholarly way analysed the tenets of Hindu philosophy practised by Bhagavaanji. He writes that "... Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji is already possessed of that sparkling trait in terms of educating the entire universe". He recalls the Vedic hymn often which another great scholar of Kashmir, Prof. J. L. Kaul, one-time Professor of English and Principal of S. P. College, Srinagar, Kashmir translated and recited before a gathering of teachers in the Teachers Training College, Srinagar in 1963 :

May we live in harmony together,
May we enjoy our days together
May we do great deeds together
May our studies be light and strength unto us
And may we not bear ill-will towards anyone
Om Santih, Santih, Santih.[9]

Recalling the Kashmiri Pandit Heritage in the present times of Crisis

The birth centenary of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji is an occasion to deliberate upon Kashmiri Pandit heritage in general. Recent events of history in Kashmir have shaken the peaceful lives of Kashmiri Pandits who are an important part of Kashmiri and global society. There has been an ethnic cleansing. Homes have been destroyed and burnt. The recent massacre of twenty two Kashmiri Pandits on 25 January, 1998 including women and children in Vandhama, Kashmir, on the eve of India's Republic Day and on the sacred night of Lailatul Qadar is a reminder of the crisis that the Kashmiri Pandit society is facing. In this dark period in the history of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir, we look to the spiritual grace of Bhagavaan Gopi Nath and other saints of Kashmir for our survival and prosperity. There is hope that the present barbaric period will end soon. A resume of the present situation in Kashmir is provided by Dr. S. N. Kaul in the *Naad*, September 1997, very effectively. Kashmiri Pandits will need the help and sympathy of all peoples of the world to rehabilitate themselves once again in Kashmir. There will be a time again when those temples on the bank of the *Vitasta* and in remote corners of the Valley shall put up lights as was done in days before the recent upheaval. The rich cultural heritage of Kashmiri Pandits cannot be washed away by the fundamental forces. This heritage is very dynamic, creative and important for global peace and progress. Modern science needs it to be able to synthesize religious and scientific world order of which Bhagavaan Gopi Nath is one great symbol. The people of USA and other western countries would like to know more about Bhagavaan Gopi Nath and about Kashmiri Pandit Community in general. A few dozen copies of the book *Kashmiri Pandits : A Cultural Heritage*, ed. by Prof. S. Bhatt [10] was purchased by the US Library of Congress recently. About the open mindedness of the great people of USA, Swami Vivekananda spoke in his Welcome Address on return to Calcutta from USA (see *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, vol. III, p. 310). He said : "An American meets you for five minutes on board a train and you are his friend, and the next moment he invites you as a guest

to his home and opens the secret of his whole living there. That is the character of the American race, and we highly appreciate it. Their kindness to me is past all narration, it would take me years yet to tell you how I have been treated by them most kindly and most wonderfully. So are our thanks due to the other nation on the other side of the Atlantic." No wonder therefore that Kashmiri Pandits in USA have recently created a sympathetic wave among Congressmen in USA in regard to the attempt to exterminate this community in Kashmir made by fundamentalist forces.

Historically, it is time to recall our heritage to fight the evil in Kashmir and in other parts of the world. We are reminded of the great works of Kashmiri Pandits like Kalhana's *Rajatarangini, Culture and Political History of Kashmir* in three volumes by P. N. K. Bamzai, *The Kashmiri Pandits* by B. N. Pandit, *Kashmiri Saivism* by B. N. Pandit, *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* by Ram Chandra Kak, *The Valley of Kashmir* by Walter Lawrence, *Daughters of Vitasta* by Prem Nath Bazaz, *Kashmir Shaivism* by J. L. Chatterjee. *Kashmiri Literature*, by Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, *Lalla Vakyani*, by A. Grierson and L. Barnett, *Folk songs of Kashmir* by J. L. Handoo, *The Vedanta Dindimah*, by Janaki Nath Kaul "Kamal", *Kashmiri Lyrics* by Prof. J. L. Kaul, *Lal Ded* by Prof. J. L. Kaul, *Parmananda* by Zinda Kaul the great poet of Kashmir, *Kashmiri Pandits in Exile*, by Kusum Paul, *Kashmiri Contemporary Literature* by P. N. Pushp, *The world of Lalla*, by Richard Temple (1924), and *Kashmiri Pandits Cultural Heritage*, edited by the present writer Prof. S. Bhatt in 1995, (which has chapters on various subjects by eminent scholars from the Kashmiri Pandit community spread in many parts of the world). This list is not exhaustive by any means. There are other scholarly works too. The contribution by this versatile community, the members of which include the late Jawaharlal Nehru and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to world society and to Indian Society is part of the glorious history of India.

Mr. Pran Nath Koul, Secretary of Trust, tells me that Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji had foreseen the exodus and suffering of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir. Bhagavaanji performed many miracles for the good of the country as are recorded in books

produced by the Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Trust. Many individuals have had the experience of witnessing extraordinary miracles through the spiritual power of Bhagavaanji. These include Mr. Philip Simpfendorfer from Australia to whom Bhagavaanji came in dreams and with whom he held a long conversation which is recorded by him. During November-December 1997, the present writer was in Canada and USA with a copy of the *Patrika* published in July 1997 with Bhagavaanji's photo on the front page. Needless to say that meditation on Bhagavaanji was a source of great strength and Bhagavaanji provided all the help needed by us. So it is a question of reposing our abiding faith in this modern saint and seer of Kashmir to whom Kashmiri Pandits in particular can look with great expectation. On the occasion of this centenary we light our lamps in memory of Bhagavaanji and pray to him to give us strength to face up to the challenges of our times. In the global context as well, problems posed by some eminent American scholars like Prof. Samuel Huntington from Harvard University, and Prof. Paul Kennedy from Yale University can be analysed keeping in view the harmony and synthesis on which the spiritual philosophy advocated by Bhagavaan Gopi Nath and other saints from Kashmir lays the utmost emphasis. Both authors have written on the 21st century world order. Prof.. Huntington has written the book titled *Clash of Civilisation and the Remaking of World Order*, while recommending an interaction and accommodation that must exist between various contemporary civilisations of Islam, Western world and other important centres of civilisation. Prof. Paul Kennedy's book titled *Preparing for 21st Century* recommends that for a stable world order there is need for population control and environment protection. On this subject, the present writer has, attempted to describe "The Creative Unity and life style in India in the 21st century"[11]. This chapter also refers to the creative unity of India, being guided by Kashmiri saints and seers like Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji.

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE: CONTRIBUTION OF SAINTS AND MYSTICAL POETS

—Triloki Nath Dhar

Our spiritual heritage is vast and timeless. The limits of the landmass inhabited by us have been defined in *Brahspati Agam* thus :

हिमालयं समारम्य यावदिन्दुसरोवरम।
तं देव निर्मतं देशं हिन्दुस्थानं प्रचक्षते।।

The country laid by gods and extending from the windward slopes of the Himalayas upto the Indian Ocean is called Hindusthan.

The antiquity of our spiritual heritage has been described by Lord Krishna in the first verse of Chapter IV of the *Bhagvad Geeta* :

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राहु मनुरिक्ष्वाकंवेऽब्रवीत।।

I imparted this imperishable knowledge of *Yoga* to Vivaswan (Sun god) : Vivaswan communicated this knowledge to Manu, Manu taught it to Ikhvakoo (ancient forefather in the lineage of Lord Rama).

The Vedas are the main source of our spiritual heritage. From Patanjali's *Mahabashya* we learn that *Rgveda* had 21 *shakhas, Yajurved* had 100 *shakhas*, the *Samved* had 1000 *shakhas* and the *Atherved* had nine *shakhas*. This adds upto 1130 *shakhas*. We further learn from other studies that there was the same number (i.e. 1130) of *Arnikas, Samahitas, Brahmanas, Kalpasutras* and *Upanishads*. However, only 108 Upanishads are existing at present.

The *Upanishads* are the most important texts on *Brahma-vidya*. Sankara has rightly stated that the study of the *Upanishads* destroys ignorance, mitigates miseries and brings the seeker nearer to God. The *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Geeta* and *Brahmsutras* of Vedvyasa are together called *Prasthan-trayee*, a magnificent edifice housing priceless gems of spiritual philosophy, ontology, Yoga and Dharma. In the *Upanishads* we find the cream of human excellence churned out for mankind. Thus the *Ishyavasyopanishad* proclaims :

इशा वास्यिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत।
तेन त्यक्तेन भञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम।।

O, man in this vast changing world, every activity and phenomenon is controlled by God, (truly this world is God's unique boon). You enjoy this boon on which every human being has equal right. But don't covet to grab the share of others.

With the disintegration of Ashoka's empire because of his weak successors the Indian society gradually through the centuries began to slide downwards. Though religious intolerance was absent yet society as a whole from the north to the south and the east to the west was fragmented politically, morally and spiritually. History bears witness to the phenomenon that a spiritual dose administered by a great saint to the mass-psyche of a deteriorating people gives it extraordinary resistance to withstand the ravages wrought by the vissicitudes of time. In a sense the truth expressed in verses 7 and 8 of Chapter IV of the *Bhagavad Geeta* is a universal law :

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम।।

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे।।

Truly, whenever *Dharma* is on the decline and unrighteousness has gained the upper hand I appear on the scene from age to age for emancipating the virtuous men, destroying the wicked and re-establishing *Dharma*.

Bertrand Russel has said that it could not be explained why pioneers of modern experimental science began to be born only from the 16th centrury onwards and not before. However, the above quoted verses of the *Bhagavad Geeta* explain this phenomenon very satisfactorily. In Europe, during the Middle Ages upto 1550 A. D. persecution by the Church had reached its peak. Every new idea preached or propounded by a person was examined by ecclesiastical censors. If the idea was found opposed to the orthodox view the person concerned would suffer humiliation, taxation, exile, torture or

death at the stake. Death at the stake was most painful. The person condemned would be tied to a fixed vertical pole and burnt alive. Nobody dared to publicise a new idea. Ptolemy's model of geocentric universe which was in accordance with the bibilical version stalled the advancement of Astronomy for at least 1000 years. While the Christians were ever mourning the most torturous death of Jesus Christ at the Cross they took pleasure in burning people at the stake. Under these circumstances, in accordance with the divine affirmation contained in the verses of *Bhagavad Geeta* quoted above, God's power manifested in the birth of revolutionary men of scientific temper who carried on a lonely struggle to establish Truth.

In India from 2nd century B. C. onwards there was not only political disintegration but the spiritual heritage of at least 3 millenniums was on the verge of being effaced. In this polluted atmosphere after a span of five or six centuries God's power manifested in the birth of three *Acharyas* amongst whom Adi Sankara is supreme. It is seen from the lives of these *Acharyas* and subsequent saints of the Bhakti Movement that they considered the whole of India as their motherland and worked ceaselessly for the uplift and emotional integration of its people.

Adi Sankara took birth probably in the seventh century when there was political, social and religious strife and anarchy at various places. He was born in a Namboodari Brahmin family at Kaladi village on the banks of the *Periyar* in Kerala. His father died when he was 8 years old. He felt that he had to fulfil a mission for which he had to enter the *Sanyas ashram.* Being the only support of his mother, Aryamba, it was with difficulty that he obtained her permission to enter *Sanyas.* As ordered by his Guru, Govind Bhagvad Pada, he went on a pilgrimage to Kasi Vishwanath. Thereafter, he set out on *Dig Vijay*, the spiritual conquest of India. He defeated in discussions many a Buddhist and Jain luminary. A large number of Buddhists and Jains returned to the fold of Hinduism. He established 4 *Mutts* at Jagannath Puri (in the east), Dwarka (in the west), Badrinath (in the north) and Shiringiri (in the south). He propounded a new philosophy of Advaita which has dazzled many a thinker of the world. Romain Rolland says that Sankara's philosophy of monism is the only rational religion in the world. He established the supremacy of *Prasthan-trayee* but was transported out of this

physical world into the eternal abode of *Brahman* at a very young age of 31 years.

On the passing away of Adi Sankara, Indian society was on the course of reformation socially, morally and spiritually. In the mountain-girdled Elysian Vale of Kashmir in the north *Trika* Philosophy of Shaivism was developing as a solid system. Utpala Deva developed a remarkable philosophical doctrine called *Pratibhigya.* It places human personality on the highest pedestal, distinct and above every quark or quanta of the physical world and by simple reasoning refutes the Buddhist doctrine of Impermanence of Ego.

Though a wave of spiritual transformation of a mild amplitude was sweeping over the Indian sub-contnient from the north to the south and the east to west yet ugly clouds of unbearable gloom were moving from the North-West towards India. Sindh and adjoining parts were populated by the Buddhists who were antagonistic towards the Hindu rulers of higher castes. This made conquest of this region easy. There were 17 invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi from 1001 A. D. to 1025 A. D. The invasions left the Indians mauled and bleeding. During this period and subsequent to this, instead of a political superman only great saints and saint poets were born perhaps because spiritual balm not only lends immortality but also gives extraordinary power to a community to bear suffering without getting extinct. Against this background let us survey the life and works of these Men of God century after century. We find Ramanujachari born in 1017 A.D. in the South. As he grew up he was sent to Kanchi to learn *Vedanta* from a reputed scholar named Yadav Prakasha. Ramanujacharya was a free thinker. He extensively toured north India. At a later age he embraced *Sanyas.* His commentary on *Brahm Sutras* titled *Shri Bhashya* is his monumental work. His philosophy is known as *Visisht Advaita.*

According to Ramanujacharya there are three entities, God (Supreme Brahman), intelligent individual soul and non-intelligent matter. Matter and Soul constitiute the body of Supreme Brahman which is capable of existing in subtle as well as gross form. The subtle form constitutes the Universe in its causal state and the gross form is the created Universe. The Individual soul animates matter to create living bodies through God's will and power. In this way,

God without our seeing Him is omnipresent, guiding every bit of universal phenomena.

Just over a century after Ramanujachari, another great saint and philosopher was born at Udipi (south India) in 1238 A. D. He was known as Madhavacharya. His father's name was Narayan Bhat. He lived a healthy life upto 79 years. He was a prolific writer of prose and poetry in Sanskrit and wrote 39 texts and many devotional hymns. According to Madhavacharya, Bhakti is the means to salvation but God's grace is indispensable. The most famous work of Madhavacharya is *Dwait.* He propounded the philosophy of differentiation. According to Madhavacharya, (1) the individual soul is different from God and can never become God, (2) God is different from matter, which is fully under his control, (3) the individual soul and matter are two distinct entities and different living bodies with different organs arise from matter and are animated by God's power, (4) no two souls are alike and the difference remains even after salvation and (5) in the realm of matter one material object is absolutely distinct from another material object. These five postulates are together called *Panch Bhedha.*

The times were becoming darker and darker. From 1238 A. D. upto early 16th century people of India had to face most despairing times. Balban's hate-campaign for the people of low origin contributed to the fossilization of the caste-system. In this environment Janadeva, supreme saint, poet and *bhakta*, took birth in 1274 A. D. His deeds and written works heralded the Bhakti Movement.

Bhakti Movement spanned six centuries from the 13th to the beginning of the 18th century. It was a wonderful phenomenon that during this period great saints, both male and female, were born everywhere in India, who were not only the greatest lovers of God but also great poets and singers, great social reformers. In the rosary of our historical centuries they are shining like priceless diamond beads at intervals. The Bhakti Movement mitigated the bitterness between the Hindus and Muslims, contributed to the development of literature in the language of the masses and more or less blunted the edge of the proselytizing sword of Islam. It also catalysed the formation of a wonderful compound out of Hindu and Islamic

cultures. The pioneers of the Bhakti Movement preached unity of mankind and oneness of God. They also stood against caste and social distinctions and ritualistic religion.

Janadeva of Maharashtra, as said above, was the harbinger of the Bhakti Movement. He was born in 1274 A. D. His forefathers were great *Shiva bhaktas*. Janadeva was a mystic, a philosopher and a great poet. The *Janeshwari* is his *magnum opus*. In it he gives the clarion call : "Let the want of self-knowledge be removed; the need of every one to experience this infinite store of spiritual bliss be met." In his *pravachans* (discourses) he would start with the clarion call of the *Kathopanishad* ; "Uttishtha jagrata prapya varam nibodhata" (Get up, wake up, approach the seers and know thyself). Janadeva's philosophy, teaching and poetry electrified people and sharpened the urge of the seekers to know the Self and God. At the same time, he is the first saint who vehemently preached to demolish the barriers of the rigid casteism.

I should like to make a passing reference to the great women saints of the Tamil region and the south. There was Akka Mahadevi who had the strongest conviction that she was wedded to Lord Shiva. Her married life was unhappy and like Lalleshwari of Kashmir she renounched the world. Discarding her clothing and not caring for the uncalled-for male gaze she set out on religious wanderings. Her *pravachans* number 350. A few resemble some *vakhs* of Lalleshwari. Her complete detachment, the intensity of her love for Shiva and the agony of her *virah* from her beloved and at times the depth of her rapture on thinking of union find expression in the most poignant language.

After Akka Mahadevi we may mention the name of Mother Avvaiya. She left the world and adopted the life of a wandering teacher. She preached ceaselessly in the entire Tamil region. She has authored 13 books out of which one is on Metaphysics. She wrote, "There are on earth only two castes, those who give are noble and those who do not give are low". In the south there was another holy woman named Andal. She refused to marry any one except Lord Vishnu. And her parents actually performed her marriage with the idol of Lord Vishnu in a temple. She composed two poetic works.

We are surveying century after century for a fleeting glimpse of the great spiritual saints and poets who are an inalienable part of our spiritual heritage. I pause around the 13th century to have a glimpse of the great Guru Gorakh Nath who, besides initiating several *sampradayas* was also the founder of the Nath sect. Guru Gorakh Nath was a supreme Yogi who had conquered the senses. Though master of *riddhies*_and *siddhies* he led a life of extreme asceticism. Rajas and princes vied with one another to adopt him as Guru but he never submitted to temptations. His yogic powers and control over the senses were exemplary. He travelled far and wide and the adherents of his Shiva *Yoga* are to be found everywhere. In the Himalayan countries his influence is predominant. In Nepal the Pashupati cult was initiated by him.

We now arrive at the year 1398 A. D. when Saint Kabir was born at Varanasi. It was one of the darkest years for India. Timur and his ferocious hordes invaded India. He carried on such a plunder and slaughter in Delhi that streams of blood flowed on roads. He dashed through Meerut to Haridwar where he killed thousands of Hindus and slaughtered a cow at Har Ki Pauri. But the year also blessed India with the birth of one of its greatest saints and poets, Sant Kabir. He was regarded by Gurudev Tagore as a saint of vast dimensions. He preached that love of God is the only path leading to salvation. He believed that pure Bhakti doesn't need ritualistic aids. To the fasting Muslim he said, "You observe fast all the day and at night kill a cow (to eat). How can you please God by shedding blood, even if you pray to Him daily?" His great stress was on the purity of Heart.

In the fifteenth century we come upon Narsi Mehta in the west of India. He is unrivalled both in respect of his ideas and poetic diction. Mahatma Gandhi was wedded to his song : "*Vaishnav jana to tene kahiya je peer paraye jane re*" (Him we call the man of God omnipresent who experiences in himself the pain that another feels). Throughout his life he preached patience, humility, amity, equal compassion for all God's creatures, self-restraint and absolute attachment to Lord Krishna.

We may now take a leap into the East of our beloved country. Here we find Sankara Deva, patron saint of Assam. He was born

in 1449 A. D. He felt at an early age that he was destined to spread the message of God's love and work for the uplift of God's people. Those days the religion of the populace of Assam was a mix of Tantricism and Animism. In 1483 A. D. Sankar Dev set out on a pilgrimage. He visited Gaya, Puri, Brindavan, Mathura, Dwarka, Kasi, Sita Kund, Brahm Kund and some holy places in the South. I am mentioning all these places to show that all our Saints loved the whole of India. He returned to Assam after 12 years and set out on his mission to spread the message of Bhakti for Krishna. He was highly versed in the *Shastras*. He composed a good number of songs, some narrative poems on the life of Lord Krishna and translated *Bhagvata* into Assamese. His message was simple, shorn of the cobwebs of aboriginal animism and fanaticism. Shanker Dev's *Vaishnavism* gripped the whole of Assam. He preached *Dasyabhava* i.e. relationship of master and servant with respect to God. It is because of Sanker Dev that dowry system is absent in Assam. Had Sankar Dev not been born the whole of Assam would have been owing allegiance to some other religion.

From Assam we come to the north-west where we find *Bharat* blessed by the birth of Guru Nanak Dev in 1469. During his ministry India was passing through horrible times. He preached utter devotion to God. Guru Nanak's devotional poetry is unique in its appeal. He felt anguished by the miserable plight of the masses due to violent invasions of Babar and gave solace and strength to the people as he moved from place to place, preaching his gospel of Love.

Six years after the birth of Guru Nanak one of the greatest poets, Surdas, was born at Siri on the outskirts of Delhi. As a poet of emotion he is supreme. His poetry is a blend of music and images and it is spiritually and morally edifying. The enormous mass of his poetry will inspire the ages to come.

For want of space it may not be possible to throw much light on Rahim and Raskhan. Both these poets were fearless. Raskhan described Krishna Leela in his poetry. Absolutely forgetful of himself, he was drunk with the love of Sri Krishna.

In the 15the century we find the birth of saint-poets taking place from decade to decade. Four years after the birth of Surdas

another great Bhakta, Vallabhacharya, was born in 1479 A. D. He spent the early part of his life at Kasi studying the *Vedas* and *Dharamashastras*. He was a great Bhakta of Lord Krishna, who blessed him with his *darshans* many a time. He wrote many books on Bhakti. His commentary on *Brahmasutras* is known as *Anu Bhashya*. Vallabhacharya believed that God is the first and ultimate reality, the cause and source of this universe and all beings. He believed that Soul is one with God but suffered delusion because of *avidhya*. For some time he remained in the court of Krishna Dev Raya of the Vijayanagar empire.

We again come to the east to have a glimpse of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He was born in Nadia in Bengal in 1485 A. D. He was mad in love for Sri Krishna, the Supreme Being. Opposing caste distinctions and untouchability he moved from place to place preaching his message of Love. People of all castes, creeds and religions ran after him just like *gopies* running after Lord Krishna. He is sometimes called Shri Krishna Chaitanya. He is the main inspiration behind the modern Krishna Consciousness Movement founded by Swami Prabhupada.

We now come to the central India to have a glimpse of the Royal Lady Mirabai who has few equals in history as a lover of God, mystic, poet and rebel against reactionery social bindings and creeds. When very young she asked her Mother who her bridegroom was. The mother, out of fun, pointed to a small idol of Lord Krishna and said, "There is your Bridegroom". This was the first and the last consummation of her marriage with lord Krishna. Later on she said, "Main to girdhar haath bikani", which conveyd that she was wedded to Sri Krishna. Her songs delineate her as a saint, mystic, *virahini*, feeling pangs of separation from her beloved, the Lord of the universe and all beings, Lord Krishna.

Divine Mothers were also born in Maharashtra. Mention could be made of Muktabai, a *yogini* and founder of a yogic cult. There was also Bahinabai. She is the only woman saint who remained married all through her life. She wrote about 727 verses in which she discusses the nature of the self, the world and the tenets of non-duality. She has said that a Brahmin is not known by his birth but by the knowledge he possesses.

In Gujrat and Kathiawad there were women poets and mystics of a high order whose poetry has come down to us through oral tradition. Legend has it that amongst such women Ganga Sati, Sati Toral and Sati Loyal were spiritually powerful women.

Proceeding further, 16th century India was blessed by the birth of Sant Tulsidas. He is alive in every household through his *Ramacharitmanas* radiating the supremely blissful light that unites our people in the realm of the spirit.

During the 18th century, Christian missionaries, aided and abetted by the British Government, wrought havoc to the morale of the Indian people. They propagated that the Indians were heathens and a degraded stock of humanity, most of whom were worshipping Satanic spirits. They pushed the Indian *psyche* into the lowest depths of inferiority complex. Who pulled us out of this gloomy nether world ? Ramakrishna Paramhamsa and Vivekananda: Mahatma Gandhi said about Ramakrishna : "....a story of religion in practice. His life was in fact the spirit of the *Upanishads* in human form, the harmony of all diverse thought of India." About Swami Vivekananda Romain Rolland said, "He was energy personified and action was his message to men." Sister Nivedita in her book *The Master as I Saw Him* writes, "Throughout these years in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed. True, he was a worker at foundations. He never used the word "nationality" nor proclaimed an era of nation making, 'Man making' was his own task. But he was a born lover, and the queen of his adoration was his Motherland.... He was hard on her sins, unsparing on her want of worldly wisdom, but only because he felt these faults to be his own. And none, on the contrary, was ever so possessed by vision of her greatness."

We may now mention some holy men of Kashmir and last of all we will try to know something about Lord Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji.

In Kashmir there were many saints who always stood absorbed in Godhead. Some saints have deeply influenced the masses. There were others who only by virtue of their thought-power influenced men and mundane affairs. Amongst those who influenced the masses for centuries to come, Lalleshwari stands on the highest pedestal.

She is not only the originator of modern Kashmiri language but also the first Kashmiri poetess. Her verses are diamonds and gems. Her influence on the make-up of Kashmiri mind is deep and abiding. Her pithy sayings and metaphors are part of common speech in Kashmir. She is venerated and held in high esteem by all Kashmiris irrespective of religion. As a philosopher, mystic guide, yogini and exponent of Shaiva philosophy, she is superb.

Lalleshwari was followed by Sheikh Noor-ud-din of Tsrar, a very popular saint and a *rishi* highly venerated by people. A large number of verses called *shrukhs* have come down to us. He ceaselessly preached absolute surrender to God and universal brotherhood. He did uninterrupted meditation in a cave for 12 years. He was the originator of the Rishi cult in Kashmir.

In the 17th century there was a highly powerful and very popular saint called Rishi Peer. He was given the title *Pir, Pandit, Padsha, Har-ud-Jehan, Mushkil Qusha* (Saint, Scholar, King of two worlds, Competent to solve difficulties). Legend has it that Aurangzeb Alamgir paid a visit to him incognito for resolving some psychiatric problem.

Again in the 17th century we were blessed by the birth of Rupa Bhavani considered an incarnation of *Sharika Shakti*, the source of *spanda* in various forms of energy. She meditated at various places for nearly 48 years. Many Muslim mystics held her in high esteem amongst whom Shah Sadiq Qalander had a large following. She died at a ripe age of nearly 100 years. The then Afgan Governor wanted to give her burial instead of cremation. She came to life and dodged the attempts of the authorities. Finally when she appeared dead and after necessary rituals, was being taken for cremation she disappeared from the bier. She has bequeathed 146 aphoristic verses in eclectic language. The verses abound in condensed metaphors, imagist phrases, suggestive expressions and onomatopoeic puzzles that encapsulate highest knowledge about the self, universe and God.

In the 18th century there was another saint called Jeevan Sahib of Rainawari. He remained in *Kagasana* (crow posture) on a plank of wood for 60 years. He radiated a powerful halo. Dogs, cats, rats and pigeons would be playing before him without attacking one another. The Afghan Governor of that time would come to pay

him respect.

We come to the 20th century now. We had Shivacharya Ishwar Swaroop Swami Laxmanji, whose greatness is not confined to Kashmir alone. It is through his grace and efforts that Shaivism the original and most advanced philosophical system of Kashmir left the confines of Kashmir and became a global philosophic discipline.

In conclusion I crown this narration with the mention of certain facts about Lord Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji whose birth centenary we have been celebrating since June 1997. Much has been written about His Holiness but one feels a tinge of bliss on knowing more and more. I was blessed by his first *darshan* at Habbakadal, Srinagar, in a certain house when I was in my twenties. After one or two years I had again the auspicious luck of having his *darshan* at Chandapura, Sathu, Srinagar, where he blessed my ears with certain utterances which I have mentioned in one of my articles published in the *Patrika*. Thereafter, I had the good luck of learning about this *Jeevan Mukta* from the Savant Shankar Pandit and Pt. Nila Kanth of Ali Kadal, Srinagar. I would briefly discuss 3 verses of the *Bhagavad Geeta* which Bhagavaan Gopinathji had recited once or twice before the said persons. One is verse 20 of Chapter II :—

न जायेते म्रियते वा कदाचिन नायं भूत्वा भविता वान भूयः।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे।।

This *Atma* in any time co-ordinate is neither born nor dies nor comes or becomes or was. This *Atma* is *sans* birth, eternal, everlasting and the most ancient.

Every body feels that this is a simple verse but there is a chasm between the meaning and realisation. Samarth Ramdas discounted mere bookish knowledge not supported by personal experience as trash.

The 2nd verse which Bhagavaanji is supposed to have recited is verse 42 of Chapter III of the *Bagavad Geeta* :

इन्द्रियाणि प्राण्याहरिन्द्रयेभ्यः परं मनः।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः।।

The sense organs have superiority over the objective

> universe, mind is superior to the sense organs; exceeding mind is intelligence; beyond intelligence is that or He.

Monad consciousness oscillates between wakeful state (जाग्रत), Dream State and Dreamless State. These states are within the realm of the senses, mind and intelligence. What is beyond is not defined in the above verse. The *Mandukopanishad* states :—

प्रपञ्चोपश्मं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चर्तुथ मन्यन्ते।

Fourth state is the ultimate truth. Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji had fallen in Love with that ultimate truth and he sacrificed everything for its sake.

The III verse of the *Bhagavad Geeta* which Bhagavaanji wanted us to ponder over is verse 6 of Chapter 15 :

न तदभासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ.को न पावकः।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम।।

> That eternal abode of Mine cannot be brought into the perception of consciousness by any radiation in the visible light; after attaining which there is no return.

How to attain that supreme abode is described in the preceding verse i.e. Verse 5 Chapter 15.

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःख संज्ञैर्गच्छन्तयमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत।।

> He who is rid of the sense of false prestige and attachment; is not tainted by company or contact; is immersed in *Atman*; free from cravings; above the opposites of pain and pleasure, (sorrow and happiness) attains to the Supreme State.

The above verse, it will be seen, completely paints the personality of Bhagavaan Gopinathji. During his life time in physcial body he didn't move beyond 30km radial distance from his abode. He did not give *pravachans* for gathering audience. Whenever he spoke he spoke softly. Sometimes he communicated through signs

and *mudras*. But those who were surrounding him could see that he was influencing mundane affairs and reversing or destroying evil forces through his supra-mental powers. He was and is solace and support to his innumerable devotees who feel secure because of his power. Even after shedding his mortal coil he appeared before his devotees. Some he has enjoined upon to work for establishing harmonic supra-mental energy centres for saving the Earth and its people from sliding towards irreversible chaos and destruction.

THE POETRY OF A SAINT : AN APPRAISAL OF RUPA BHAVANI

—Neerja Mattoo

Rupa Bhavani, also known as Alakheshwari, or simply Saheb, was born in 1625 in the family of Madhava Dhar at Safakadal, Srinagar. From her very childhood to the end of her long life—she died in 1721— she is said to have shown an inclination for the other-worldly. Though married at the age of seven, which was the prevalent practice in the cultural pattern she belonged to, she renounced the householder's way of life, and left home. Wandering from one secluded place to another, she practised great penance, and went into long periods of meditation, like the Buddha, in search of spiritual awakening and salvation. Having at last found, through profound yogic *sadhana* and an inward-looking eye, the secret of equipoise, she communicated her experience of a cosmic consciousness to her dedicated band of devotees and followers, in poetic utterances. These were carefully recorded and thus are preserved for posterity.

This paper is going to skirt the issue of the miracles she is supposed to have performed right from the age of three; her followers believe that she was an incarnation of the goddess Bhavani. The focus will be on her poetry, its content and form.

Her main work is the *Rahasyopadesh*, a collection of one hundred and forty six stanzas in the form of *vakhs*, a purely Kashmiri verse form in which the mystical and didactic poetry of Lal Ded was written in the fourteenth century. It consists of four lines, each a trochaic tetrametre, and does not adhere to a strict rhyme scheme. In fact more often than not, there is no rhyme, but a solemn rhythm, a certain dignity of movement, which suits the generally grave tone of religious poetry.

The main facts of her life are well known, thanks to a father's vision and belief in his daughter's spiritual destiny and legacy, which led him to have all the events connected with her life and work properly documented. It is remarkable that a father, who had followed custom in performing a "child marriage", should welcome his daughter back into his home after she calmly announces that it is

not possible for her to continue to live with her husband and his family because they show no sensitivity to her "differentness". In the beginning of the seventeenth century, here is a woman who asks for and, what is more, gets "a room of her own". Not only does she refuse to follow a woman's common fate at that time, that of quiet submission to the norms set down by society, but dares to break free and chart a course of her own. No doubt her father's courage in supporting her decision and making it possible for her to pursue an alternative way of life had a lot to do with his own spiritual orientation and the certainty of his belief in her divinity. He was the first to acknowledge her Sainthood and established the practice of her being venerated as a saint. A temple and shrines were built in the places she spent time in. Even today the western educated members of the Dhar clan she belonged to, make an offering of sugar candy at her shrine twice a year, and fast on her death anniversary. Whichever family a Dhar girl goes into after her marriage, also carries on with the practice. The result is that today most Kashmiri Pandit families have come under Rupa Bhavani's sphere of influence, believing that she was a saint endowed with great spiritual power. It is said that in the beginning, the other members of her father's family would ridicule him and deliberately cook a stew of sheep's hooves in the kitchen, so that the strong, coarse smell and flavour of the non-vegetarian dish, which took a long time to cook, would permeate the air of mediation and *puja* in the house. But Madhava Dhar and his daughter refused to be provoked by such needling and Rupa Bhavani's patience became as legendary as Lal Ded's. The father's supportive role, of course, made it easier for the former. No wonder she begins the main part of *Rahasyopadesha* with the acknowledgment that her father is among her first Gurus :—

Om gwar antar tath nirmalam
Shuddham atyant viyadharam
Lal nam lal parma gwaram
Shiva Madhav naham parmam Brahma soham

(I begin with the sacred sound and symbol, "Om". Having installed the pure and greatly learned Guru in the form of Lalded and Madhava, in a heart and mind purified, I realize that I am reduced to nothing in myself, But become a Supreme Self, a part of Brahma Himself).

Here is a metaphysical conceit in the manner of the English poet John Donne—one is nothing and everything at the same time, which might sound absurd at first sight, but a closer look reveals that that is exactly what happens in a mystic experience of merger with the Supreme Reality.

Veneration of the Guru is a very important concern of hers. The Guru is necessary not only to initiate her into the world of knowledge, but his hand is needed to guide at every step of the arduous spiritual journey, to discipline an otherwise straying mind and keep it on the track of the mystical quest.

A close look at the *vakhs* reveals that Rupa Bhavani's main preoccupation is with primal philosophical questions : the purpose of Life and how to bring about a harmonious relationship among the constituents of individual personality—body, mind, emotion and soul. She talks about how one can break free from the limitations of the body while working towards spiritual evolution and how a tranquility of mind, while engaged in the quest for the Eternal Truth, can be brought about. The detailed description of her own yogic practices and the experience of a rare ecstatic state brought about by an awakened *kundalini*, in which the burden of the material world seems to fall off and becoming pure spirit, the goal of merger with the Absolute Reality is achieved, are some of the main concerns of her work. The concept of *shunya*, (the state of Nothingness or the idea of the great Void) is mentioned again and again in the spirit of the *sufi* who asks for nothing but the total annihilation of Self. The following verse, richly metaphorical, illustrates :—

Gwarith sumarith shunya khadum
Parud morum tavay suti
Pantsa agna lal chadovum
Gwash prazulum tavai suti.

(Deep search and thought achieved this state of nothingness,
That is how I stilled the mercurial mind.
Five kinds of sacrificial fires were lit
That is what brought about Radiant Light).

The motif of "radiant light" is a recurring one in all mystic poetry, whether in the East or the West. As the opposite of

"darkness", it is the final dispeller of doubt and a revelation of Truth, which is said to be dazzling in nature. In Rupa Bhavani's work too we find a similar ardent wish to still the restless, doubting mind, rip up the veil of ignorance and see the "Light". She wants to shed the burden of the gross reality behind which the inner spirit is hidden, and thus find self-realization.

Being a record of the highly advanced mystic practices and experiences of an extremely evolved spirit, her *vakhs* have remained inaccessible to the ordinary reader. Due to the esoteric, subtle nature of her experiences, her poetic work is often enigmatic. There is nothing like an instantaneous rapport—profound thought, combined with intense feeling, makes her verse obscure to the generally less sophisticated reader, who, not being on the same mystical plane, finds it difficult to unravel the densely packed meaning. This is the main reason why her poetry has never been "popular". Unlike most Kashmiri poetry, her *vakhs* have never been sung, nor set to music to become part of a professional singer's repertoire, which was mainly responsible for the preservation of Kashmiri poems in an oral tradition. They are the province of the "initiated", the verses being generally recited only at gatherings of her followers at special occasions like her death anniversary. Even those who have taken up a serious study of her *vaakhs* in the past, have added to the obscurity by interpreting the meaning according to their own particular philosophy. That the language used is a mixture of old Kashmiri, Sanskrit and Persian, makes the task even more difficult. To her followers and devotees, however, her words are precious gems, cherished till this day due to the aura of Sainthood that surrounds her. A lay person is struck by the sheer force and weight of her argument, often presented through use of the device of the "metaphysical conceit". An analysis of her poetry can, therefore, be both a challenge and a delight.

The *vakhs* reveal a personality very well-versed in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, *Vedanta* and the most advanced Hindu philosophical thought. Rupa Bhavani talks of the concept of non-duality as one who has felt the presence of the Universal Spirit residing within her own self, displaying a rare confidence in prescribing the right path to her listeners. Here is an example :

Kripa ta karoon yus panay zane
Manuye mane din tay rath
Sarvaroop dhyana yus parzane
Mane mani ta nanyas zath

(The one who knows within oneself the Cause and the Grace,
Knows that Day and Night exist in the mind itself,
To one who knows the Multi-faceted One through meditation,
The meaning is clear. Mind itself knows the nature of the Self.)

Obviously, Rupa Bhavani must have been born in a culture steeped in religion, where Sanskrit, the language of the Hindu scriptures and Persian, the official language, were part of ordinary discourse. The ease with which words from both languages become a part of her poetic diction suggests the richness of her linguistic background. Born in a scholarly Brahmin family that had only a few generations back come to settle in Kashmir from South India, and considering its rich socio-religio-cultural background, it would seem that such a vocation and such scholarship would come easy, but it has to be noticed that she alone of her brothers and sisters received a spark that set her on a mystical journey uniquely her own. In fact a brother of hers is supposed to have been illiterate, even though as a son he must certainly have received his father's attentions as a teacher ! The following is a good example of her linguistic virtuosity, where she shifts with ease from the Sanskritised Kashmiri to the Persianised :

Var diyi ta buh veraye vasa
Bhumi pad game rasa rasa
Khasan to shabad shumum ahang
Sarang rag veena ta chyang

(If he should grant a boon, I would wed myself to my essence,
My feet slowly treading the earth,
I would rise in a resonance of the eternal sound—
And the music of the *sarang*, the *veena* and the *chang*).

"Bhumi" (the earth) and "game" (walking) are pure Sanskrit, while "ahang" and "chang" are Persian words. This verse also indicates the richness of the culture where there is a familiarity with a wide variety of musical instruments : the *sarang* of Kashmir, the *veena* of South India and the *chang* of Central Asia and the Middle East. The alliteration, the repetitive sibilants and the assonance point to a high skill in musicality. Though the thought here is not simple, it is fine poetry, which makes it accessible to a finely tuned temperament. The *vakh* is an example of perfect fusion of thought and form, feeling and its expression, sound and meaning. The journey of the spirit, ascending through various levels of being to reach the final one of awareness of the Supreme, in fact reveals the divinity lying within one's own self. It is this truth that the *vakh* so felicitously, so harmoniously reveals.

Rupa Bhavani's philosophy seems to lay stress not only on the concept of non-duality in the field of the spiritual, but even among human beings she advocates the radical concept of striving to rise above all external or man-made distinctions. That a mystic, devoted to the idea of finding salvation through individual effort and merit, should think of showing a way to the lesser privileged, is astonishing. That is what makes her not only a yogi, but a socially concerned human being, who is responsible for the removal of many social evils from Kashmiri Pandit society. She rejected ritual and mere form in religion.

Nav tara vav savara
Na rang na varn ta na guthur
Bronh an nyenday pata kar varay
Kohanday dari ta kas dare.

(Ferry the river with the wind as ferryman,
Colourless, casteless, clanless.
Weed your field and then do the rest,
Who then the debtor and who creditor ?).

Metaphors from farming and river transport, common sights in Kashmir, are used to explain the absurdity of set notions of superiority or otherwise of birth. When the Divine, who ferries us across the turbulent ocean of this world, has no colour, form or *gotra* (clan name), who are we to impose such distinctions on mere

humans ? One must remind oneself that these are words spoken in seventeenth century Kashmir, by a woman, who must have had unbounded courage and a rare strength of conviction to make such a radical statement against discrimination.

Yus mani heye dhyan to panas tole
Kunh na geli to kunsi na gele
Zagi Haras ta lagyas bele
Panay panas suti mele

(The one who meditates and consciously weighs oneself,
Judges none and is judged not,
Only waits for Him and His benediction,
Such a one will fuse with the Eternal One).

Here is an earnest desire to surrender everything and achieve a state of supreme detachment, where nothing matters except one's own estimation of oneself. Accountability is only to the "Eternal One". There is no "other" here, just the spirit of the seeker and the sought. That an important sermon is delivered in such a condensed form, points to the high degree of poetic skill.

While describing the ecstasy of a mystic experience, Rupa Bhavani comes very close to the "fine madness" of the sufi *dervish*, using the metaphor of the *saqi* and her cups of intoxicating wine :—

Deeh anand nada may
Lotsan piala mutsur
Saqay pilao hu-hu-ha
Bu baha ha-ha matwala

(The body is bliss, a river of wine !
The cups of these eyes are open.
O Saqi, come and fill them to the brim, do !
Hoo Hoo Ha ! I cry in ecstasy, a madness in my heart !)

This is another pointer to the liberal education she must have received, which apparently included lessons from Persian poetry. Hence her familiarity with Omar Khayyam (?-1123) and Hafiz (1320—'89), who use the metaphor from the tavern so liberally in their mystic poetry.

She uses similes from not only the Hindu mythology, but from normal day to day activities in order to convey thoughts and observations about the Transcendental. One finds a very well worked out device of the Epic simile, using the process of making ghee (an essential commodity while performing a *yagya*), in the following two *vakhs:*

Mandh samudhar don sani
Chhavak samadh nad-bindu tsath
Dan akhand milayo makhan
Sadikaris drayom gev
Tav roop yagya hoomas karith
Ahut ditsas angan hunz
Jyot parzane karan chyane
Mane atur ta nanyas bwoy

(Churn the milk of the mind, your Self the churner,
Locate the Primal Point and Sound. Break it down
with the power of meditation.
Heat the butter of knowledge,
Spiritually empowered, you will find the ghee.
With these ingredients, a yagya I perform,
Offering the oblation of my own limbs?
The flames that rise are Your own effulgence.
In them my essence revealed, I stand as myself,
finally.)

There is a deep concern for realization of one's true identity, to find the centre of one's being and then to rise above it, but the heaviness of the mystical concern is lightened by the use of a purely domestic metaphor. The images connected with the process of churning also have other connotations to the Hindu, associated as they are with the churning of *Kshirsagar*, and the childhood of Lord Krishna. All this adds more layers of meaning to the two *vakhs*.

There is a brooding intellectuality that characterizes Rupa Bhavani's poetry. Unlike most mystic poets who suggest an intuitive comprehension of the Unknown, she can only merge herself with it after she has analyzed the whole process of the exercise, going over all the steps one by one, pondering over what has been achieved and what remains. That is why her poetry needs an intellectual

response as much as an emotional one. There is a sophistication of thought, a simultaneously inward, outward, even upward looking eye, with which our eyes and mind have to be synchronized in order to understand the full import of her poetry. But with a little effort, an appreciation of her poetry is possible even to the uninitiated. It is necessary to draw her out of the confines of sainthood in order to realize that she was not only a mystic, but a talented poet, an extraordinary woman of courage, whose real place in the history of Kashmiri literature and thought needs to be better researched and determined.

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE AND SCIENCE TODAY

—Dr. B. L. Kaul

I feel privileged to have been invited to speak in the seminar on "Our Spiritual Heritage and the contribution of Saints and Mystic Poets" being held today as part of Bhagavaan Gopinathji's birth centenary celebration. However, I am not sure whether I am qualified to speak on this topic as it seems completely outside the field of a man of science like myself. So I have chosen to talk specifically about science today in relation to our spiritual heritage. Science essentially concerns things material and can be explained, while spirituality is something which has to be experienced and may not be possible to explain. Nevertheless as I have devoted my life to science and at the same time inherited a religious bent of mind, I find that there are many things common between science and religion. Religion is one of the most potent of human tendencies. Societies, howsoever primitive, do not and cannot exist without a cult or religion and spiritual experience of some sort.

One is reminded of the speech of Dr. Radha Krishnan at Teheran on May 12, 1963 in which he reminded the Iranian students that their great mathematician-astronomer Omar Khayyam, according to the English translation of Fitz Gerald, had said that the last day of reckoning would reap what the first day of creation wrote. But at the same time none can deny that science has had a great impact on the religious outlook. The wonderful discoveries of science completely altered the overall picture of the universe and of man's position in it. Scientists like Newton, Thomas Edison and Louis Pasteur can be compared to saints, for all of them as truth-seekers have striven for man's happiness on earth. Moreover, during the last two centuries of scientific progress the application of scientific methodology to the study of religion has made attempting a comparative study of the religions of the world on scientific lines possible. We no longer look on religion as something static and there are developments in religions as there are in science and political

thought. The religious spirit is by no means always the same at different times and different levels of culture. At the root of every religion is the quest for enquiry into the unknown, and an ardent desire for explanation and comprehension. It is here that a sense of sacredness, a sense of dependence and elements of wonder get tied up with religion.

It is a matter to ponder whether religion and spirituality are the same and if not, what differentiates them. A person of religion could well be miles away from true spirituality while a truly spiritual person may not essentially belong to any particular religion. There are scores of examples of saints about whose religion no one seems to have any idea. Sai Baba of Shirdi is an outstanding example. So is the case with most scientists. They may not believe in any particular religion but their commitment to human happiness and values is unmistakable.

On the face of it science and spirituality may seem to have nothing in common, but both are based on a similar approach. A man of science in search of an answer to a problem starts with a rational approach, so does a saint in search of God. Both have a firm resolve in their minds to reach the goal. Meditation and concentration are the means that they use in their pursuits. Saints in deep meditation are hardly aware of their surroundings. A devoted scientist is also absorbed in his work and thoughts. It is said of Louis Pasteur that he had to be reminded continuously about things personal and he had even to be reminded on his wedding day about the ceremony. Logic and ethics are the other two things on which modern science is based. Spirituality transcends both logic and ethics. In my opinion, for spiritual progress the most essential traits for the aspirant, are what we call in Kashmiri 'Sezar' straight-forwardness, 'Shozar', purity of mind and clarity of thought and 'Pazar' truthfulness. Without straight-forwardness no progress can be made by a *sadhak*. The path has to be straight and there are no lanes and bylanes. In other words, there is no scope for crookedness. Purity of heart and mind is another important requirement for spiritual progress. There is no scope for cleverness. And finally there is truthfulness. In search of spiritual attainment or the ultimate Truth there is no scope for

falsehood. On a closer look these are also the essential qualities a true scientist mostly possess. It is said of Einstein that when he was teaching at Princeton University after the World War II his colleagues would leave their children in his care whenever they went socializing. The little kids would play and let him do their homework. A man of science has a unique simplicity about him and his behaviour. He has a religious feeling about Truth. Truth to him is sacred. A scientist refuses to believe that any religious system is right if it denies attention to new truths which he learns to wrest from Nature. Scientific discovery like spiritual activity is always progressive. A scientist knowing that both science and religion have developed and grown alongside does not feel like being subversive. He wishes religion to take into account the changing perception and new truths about the universe that science has arrived at. He does not approve of bigotry and always speaks the truth. When the Pakistani Scientist Dr. Abdus Salam visited India after receiving the Nobel Prize, he was frank enough to admit that the Hindu scriptures had inspired him to put forth his concept of particles for which he was awarded.

Modern science tells us that the human mind has enormous potentialities and possibilities of power. The planet Earth on which we reside is beset with dangers arising out of the stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction. To save the human race both spirituality and the scientific spirit have their parts to play. The saints and the scientists have to unite and make joint efforts to pull the human race out of the present morass. In the *Mahabharata*, Krishna says to Arjuna, "To you I declare this holy mystery: there is nothing nobler than humanity". Islam declares man as “Ashraf-ul Mukhluqat”, the crown of all creation. No religion which does not make social amelioration an essential part of its teaching can appeal to the modern mind. Science is one attempt to solve the riddles of the universe, religion is another. The visions of the mystics have been corroborated by the scientists. The higher scientists and the greatest mystics are at one in their sense of wonder and awe and science and spirituality are but different roads to the same Truth. Science can destroy only superstitions but never the true spirit of religion. It is because of the tendency of science to

destroy superstitions and false concepts that religious zealots feel threatened. This is exactly why religious fundamentalism is raising its head and religious fanatics, to use Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's words, are "creating hell on this earth to reach heaven". The human mind is opening up and it is my belief that the 21st century will see an end of fundamentalism and religious bigotry of all shades.

In a nutshell both science and spirituality are complementary to each other and for the fuller and healtheir growth of this world both will have to work in tandem though their methodology of working may not be the same. The scientist has a deep sense of awe confronting the mysteries of the Universe as much as the most God-intoxicated mystic. The hope of humanity lies in a reconciliation between spirituality and the scientific spirit.

In the context of the Indian ethos, there is, to my mind no confilict between the scientific temper and spirituality. Both have always been in harmony in the Vedic and post-Vedic period. The progress made in the fields of medicine, astronomy, mathematics. engineering. architecture and weaponery much before the arrival of the outsiders on the one hand and the growth of mystical thought on the other, would just not have been possible without the mix of science and spirituality. Most of the ancient *acharyas* like Vishwamitra, Agastya and Drona were teacher-scientist-mystics all in one. Otherwise how do we explain the existence of *Vimans*, *agnibhans* etc. along with such works as the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*? Not only were they spiritualists and scientists but they were also conservationists and did not allow wanton destruction of the environment and wildlife. All ancient monuments were built against the backdrop of forests. lakes, rivers and similar other things of scenic beauty speaking of a high sense of aesthetics and spiritual values.

Kashmir as the seat of spirituality in the Indian subcontinent has been lucky to have given birth to great men and women who earned name and fame. Kashmir Shaivism with its distinct philosophy has been a great influence on the thought and behaviour of the Kashmiris. There has been a continuous chain of saints, sufis and mystical poets like Lalleshwari, Rupa

Bhavani, Parmanand, Shams Faqir and Wahab Khar. Their influence on the Kashmiri mind has been immense. Despite the turmoil brought in its wake by the 20th century the saintly order and mysticism have withstood the test of time in Kashmir and the rest of India. It is saints like Bhagavaan Gopinathji who have kept the light of spirituality burning. I firmly believe that it is the strength that emanates from this light that keeps us alive despite what has happened to us during the last eight years of exodus from the *Rishibhumi.* The spirit of tolerance and strength inherited by us from our spiritually elevated forefathers, combined with a scientific temper will help us enter the 21st century with greater determination to face the challenges of an uncertain future. If we succeed in this, it will indeed be a tribute to saints like Bhagavaanji in whose memory we have assembled here today. May Bhagavaanji shower his blessings on us all the time.

OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE : SPIRITUALITY AND MUSIC

—Prof. Rageshwari Mattoo

When God, or Nature, or whatever Cosmic Force shaped the creation of our world and created Man and endowed him, out of all creatures, with the faculties of thought, of analysis, of introspection and of creativity, the birth of Spirituality was heralded, and also of Music. Spirituality and Music have come, developed and matured together since the beginning of time and it is not possible to think of the one without the other or to separate the one from the other.

Spirituality as we see it today, has come to us through a constant process of evolution. It started, perhaps, with what we may term as primitive beginnings: Nature-worship born of the fear of the elements like fire, natural calamities and wild creatures, coupled with wonderment at the bounties of the sun, rain, and the productivity of the soil and forests. However, as man's capacity to analyse and introspect evolved and as he began to understand the working of Nature, he also learnt to place everything in its proper perspective and to appreciate the cause and effect of the functioning of the world around him. Accordingly, what had begun as the fear of Nature and the Elements gradually evolved into appreciation and understanding of the functioning of not only the world but of the whole Universe as man perceived it. He began to understand the process of cause and effect and to perceive in the whole system a Divine Force which he defined as Godhood, controlling not only the functioning of the Universe but also the evolution and fate of Mankind itself. Thus man embarked on a continuing and unending process of analysis and introspection which came to be recognised and termed as Spirituality. Sages and Saints of all hues the world over have been and continue to be involved in the pursuit of the abiding knowledge that we call Spirituality and this pursuit continues unabated down the Ages.

Among the many attributes that Man has been endowed with is his inborn sense of rhyme, rhythm, cadence and beat. He perhaps first perceived these in Nature, such as the crash and the

roll of thunder, the sounds and cadence of falling rain, the roar of mountain torrents, the surf at the sea-shore and the murmur of running water in placid streams. He also heard the song of birds and other creatures and observed the dance of peacocks and the mating behaviour of animals and birds. Thus, alongside his research into Spirituality also began his research into what many millennia later came to be recognised as music and the performing arts. Initially man perhaps used his sense of rhythm and beat to express his emotions, such as the display of joy at success in his search for food, his sustenance or sorrow over loss of any kind. As language evolved in the progress of man, rhyme and cadence blended with rhythm and beat, and Music was thus born.

In man's pursuit of Spiritual knowledge leading to the realisation of the Divine Cosmic Force which he named God, his genius and creative urge made him devise language, and so move on to compile hymns and songs in praise of God and the Deities, which he articulated through his sense of rhyme, cadence, rhythm and beat, having got refined and honed in the process of his evolution. In all probability he started with a chant of praise to the accompaniment of a beat produced by the stamping of feet, clapping of hands or beating of the ground with sticks, which evolved through the ages into song with sophisticated rhythm and beat, accompanied by percussion instruments such as drums of various kinds, reeds such as flutes and string instruments devised initially from dried and cured animal gut stretched over resonating surfaces.

And so we come to the Vedic era, some three thousand years ago, by which time civilisations and societies had been formed in the Indo-Gangetic Plain of North India and sages and thinkers had formulated various social codes which came to be known as the 'Vedas'. The four Vedas, the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Atharwa-Veda and the Sam-Veda, dealt with different aspects of human conduct, relationships, politics, commerce, medicine, and so on. Of these four the Sam-Veda is exclusively devoted to fine and performing arts, mainly music, both vocal and instrumental, and dance. Music and dance forms were initially devoted solely to spiritual and devotional themes in praise of God and the Deities, extolling their greatness and their virtues and feats. In the process

of its evolution music was codified into 'Raagas', which in turn were bound in the scale "Sa- Re- Ga- Ma- Pa Dha- Nee" denoting the basic sound range. The different *Raagas* encompassed specific mood ranges of the time cycle of twenty four hours, besides capturing the moods of the seasons, depicting emotions ranging between joy and sorrow, elation and terror. To cope with the need for maintaining and imparting rhyme,rhythm, symphony, harmony and the myriad requirements of the *Raagas*, a whole range of percussion, reed, string, bells and cymbals and other instruments evolved over the centuries to advance and embellish the quality of music. When the *Sam-Veda* was brought into being this music came to be recognised as *Shastriya Sangeet*, later also known as "Classical" Music, as opposed to the Folk Music of the various regions of the country, which also developed and grew alongside *Shastriya Sangeet* and in the process picked up many of its principles. It was therefore inevitable that the Folk Form also provide some of the finest devotional music in the language and idiom readily understood and appreciated by the common man in the dialect of his region. India's greatest mystics and saints, notable among them being such luminaries as Kabir, Surdas, Meera Bai and a host of others in an unending list, have given us some of the most memorable and immortal devotional poetry in the folk idiom, set in the format of folk tunes. Perhaps the most notable among the exponents of folk music was Amir Khusro, who not only provided sterling service to the *shastriya* form of music, but also composed many hymns and their renderings in the folk style in Hindi, Urdu and some dialects of the Northern region of the country. To Amir Khusro also goes the credit of giving a new lease of life to the "Sufiana" form of music, in which he composed renderings in Urdu and Farsi (Persian). A very notable variation of folk music is the "Qawwali", in which style many superb renderings of devotional music have been composed. The *Qawwali* is rendered essentially in Urdu and sometimes in Farsi, principally on Islamic themes, either in the orthodox or the Sufi style. In orthodox renderings the use of instruments is avoided and the vocal singing is accompanied only by the clapping of hands, whereas instruments are used in the sufi versions.

Classical dance form also developed and evolved alongside classical music to enable devotees to give visual form to the audio

medium and give vent to their devotional emotions through "*Abhinaya*" (Action) to satisfy the creative urge. Devotional dance form in the folk style had been in vogue well before the classical forms evolved and were extensively practised in some form or the other all over the country.

As civilisation spread beyond the Indo-Gangetic Plain to other parts of the Sub-Continent, sages and saints also travelled to other regions to acquire, impart and disseminate knowledge and spread their spiritual message. They took with them, along with other things, their "wealth" of *Shastriya Sangeet* and Dance, and as they spread, the various regions inevitably modified them to suit their own genius and cultural and linguistic peculiarities. Thus evolved the variations of the original music of the Sam-Veda, such as Khayal and Dhrupad of North India and the Karnatak School of music of the Deccan region. Dance form also evolved into Kathak of the Northern region, Odissi of the Central region, Manipuri of the East and a whole range in the South where the "Dev Dasi" tradition was in vogue in the temples: Bharat Natyam, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, Mohini Attam and some other dance forms also flourished along with the regional folk dance form in various parts of the country, such as the *Raas* of Uttar Pradesh, *Dandia Tipri* and *Lazium* of Gujarat and Maharashtra.

What is important to remember regarding all Indian Music and Dance Forms, whether classicial or folk, is that at the outset and through succeeding centuries they remained exclusively devotional and dedicated to the spiritual uplift of man and the society he lived in. They were a means of awakening in the individual an awareness of the bounties of Nature and the vastness of the Cosmic Force called God and the need for the Soul to identify with these. It is in comparatively recent times that with the decline of the hold and influence of religion and the ascendancy of temporarl power over religions and the increased opulence of princely courts, that *Shastriya Sangeet* and dance travelled from the temples to the princely courts, and the princes and kings began to extend patronage to the maestros who were the exponents and custodians of these music and dance forms.

While the theme of this essay has been essentially Indian music and dance and their relationship with spiritual uplift, it is

by no means implied that this relationship has been confined only to India or the Indian sub-continent. This relationship has been manifest in most other societies, cultures and religions the world over. In Christianty hymns in praise of God sung together by the congregation are a prominent feature of practically all church services. Churches have bells that ring musically and call to prayer and choirs trained to sing hymns in their own classical music scores to the accompaniment of the organ.

Islam forbids the use of musical instruments in mosques as also during devotional prayer, but nevertheless lays great stress on tonal quality and cadence in the Muezzin's call to the faithful, five times a day. His call has to be melodious and must have the tonal quality it needs to be heard clearly in every home within the range of his mosque. The recitation of the Holy Quran, which is in verse, is required to be done in the correct cadence and rhythm, which calls for considerable muscial ability, particularly as it shouldn't involve any aid of instruments. Among the Shias, who recite "Marsiahs" and "Naats" in the *Imambaras*, the ban on muscial instruments is often compensated for by a human voice rendering the basic notes "Sa" and "Pa" to prevent the singers straying from the correct notes and tune.

The Sikh faith has incorporated music as an essential component, practically, of all worship and ritual. The *Guru Granth Sahib* has been compiled entirely in verse and is recited in the poetic format. All *Shabad* and *Kirtan*, which form an essential adjunct to worship, are sung by professional 'Ragis', mainly in chorus (rarely solo) to the accompaniment of a wide variety of musical instruments. In some of the more important Sikh shrines and Gurudwaras *Shabad* and *Kirtan* are sung practically round the clock.

Sufism, as far as is known, came to Kashmir from Iran and was brought by scholars and saints who practised a liberal form of Islam, distinct from the orthodox, practised by the followers of the more binding tenets of the Holy Quran. The Sufis recognised the teachings of the Prophet, peace be on him, but were also prepared to accept many of the philosophies of Hinduism and other faiths which they absorbed into their cult. The sufis had no objection to the use of musical instruments to accompany their hymns and *naats*. They brought with them the *Santoor*, basically a Central

Asian instrument, and this became the principal instrument that accompanies the "Sufiana Kalam" in Kashmir. This form of music has over the centuries contributed to the growth of a vast treasure of devotional music, in both Farsi and Kashmiri. Though Sufism is practised in many parts of North India where it has a large following, this type of Sufiana music has remained confined largely to the Kashmir Valley.

To sum up, it would be appropriate to quote from an article by Nergis Dalal published some time ago, on the theme "Words That Resonate With Power". She writes :

> In the late 19th century one of the Survey of India's most famous early explorers, Pandit Nain Singh, arrived at the Thok Jalung gold fields in Tibet, after a long and arduous trek through Gartok and crossing the vast and desolate stretch known as the Antelope Plain.
>
> Here Nain Singh found the Buddhist *mantra* "Om Mani Padme Hum" inscribed on the stones and cliff walls around him. At 17,000 feet the air seemed to resound silently with the *mantra*, repeated over and over again in the cold air. *Mantras* are best understood as articulate sounds which unite the sub-conscious, the conscious and the super-conscious planes, and when properly used, especially in meditation, they are held to have the power to bring the individual to a higher state of consciousness. Formed from Sanskrit syllables, words or phrases, they are believed to posess a divine cosmic energy.
>
> Both to the Hindus and Buddhists the *mantra* of *mantras* is "OM", the primordial sound of reality beyond the limitations of time and space. *Mantras* are not magic spells ; they are the means of concentrating and arousing forces that already exist within the human *psyche*. When repeated silently or aloud, they set off subtle vibrations which affect different psychic centres or 'chakras' in the body.

Nergis Dalal then goes on to define the various *mantras* which help to merge the identity of the meditator with the Absolute, and with which the "Kundalini" can be aroused.

Nothing, however, illustrates better the relationship between spirituality and music than a short verse by P. C. Bodh when he stood on the bank of Mansarovar Lake and gazed up at Mount Kailash in all its splendour in the distance across the crystal clear waters of the lake. The verse that rose unbidden from the depths of his soul reads as follows :

When the abode of Shiva
Cast in the golden... of Varuna
Made it like a Dome, a stupa of gold
Built atop the roof of the World
I listened to the tune of Nature
I listened to Santoor's magic
As it flowed from Shiva's rendering
In 'Evening Prayer'
In 'Twilight Shadows'.

NOT TO BE FORGOT !

—Iqbal. N. Bakhshi

Fortunately for us, the saga of Mystics and the great Masters is not merely a matter of past record, a forgotten monument to a bygone period of our long history or even like a facetious 'Once Upon a Time' tale, told and then lost to memory. It is rather an unceasing feature of this land with a promise and perspective that Mystics come and continue to be a living part of our culture and spiritual ethos. It is these legendary persons who have ultimately determined and set the pattern and style of our life more than any one other contributing factor. In our own times, who else but Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji himself, must take precedence in this illustrious class as one of the most distinguished personages, to have blessed our land? The one, indeed, 'NOT TO BE FORGOT' ! never at all. He has been so remarkable in his own superb manner, for putting us in tune with our inseparable and inalienable Self. With his subtle touch, Bhagavaan Ji has enabled so many of us to restrain our wayward minds, to fathom what after all, seems indubitable and lies enshrined within our own hearts and calls for our attention persistently.

Bhagavaan Ji himself had to pass through what was a nightmarish phase of struggles before he got established firmly in his inner Self. But more of that a little later. What deserves mention first is the great influence he exercised on people around him, creating an abiding interest towards matters other than mundane. His sole purpose during all his later years, was to arouse people to the irrefutable fact of Universal Consciousness as dwelling in the sanctuary of the heart. And that is how all his admirers and devotees today, deriving unalloyed joy and Bliss, remember and cherish him.

But then, all those who help create in us an awakening to discover our real nature become indispensable, whether in the East or the West. What is Universal cannot be the monopoly of even an earthly paradise! One is, therefore, at once reminded of another great personage who exercised tremendous influence on his times through what he said and wrote, Emerson. How profound he

is when he dished up that succulent bit of delectable food for contemplation : ".... what lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us...." The message is universally appropriate and, indeed, only too true! Understandably, therefore, it finds an echo in a hymnal utterance by a kindred soul, elsewhere—more or less in a similar strain :

अपने मन में डूब कर पा सुरागे जिंदगी–
गर मेरा बन न सका न बन–अपना तो बन!

Enchanted by the vigour of the words one might well ask—lives there a soulful man who to himself would have said that he was not inspired by Emerson's remarkable words or was immune to its chastening effect ? Here, one cannot resist the temptation to refer to that great Encyclopaedia of all-round instruction, knowledge and wisdom—the *Bhagavad Gita*. We hear the Lord declare that He is the great Truth 'who resides in the hearts of all beings'—the Supreme Reality whom the Vedas and scriptures extoll:

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि संनिविष्टो, मत्त: स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो, वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाह्म।।

—BG—15/15

or again as simply told by the great Kabir—

मो दो क्या तू ढूंढेरे बन्दे? मै तो तेरे पास में......

Bhagavaan Ji, whom Providence had bequeathed a valour unmatched, a representative mind and a razor-sharp understanding, with inner skills honed already, naturally developed a burning desire to set forth in search of his own identity without wasting time on trifles. Soon, the auspicious moment arrived for him, the moment of spiritual day-break, which he admitted into himself and which took possession of him, completely. Once initiated, there was for him no turning back and having any regrets.

To go on cultivating this perception assiduously, without so much as batting an eyelid, albeit under stress of his own evolving nature, was no ordinary joke. Persevering on this self-inflicted

course is not for the weakling nor for the chicken-hearted. For the steadfast the gates are self-opened, eventually landing him on the exalted Runway to go and experience the joy of unstoppable flights far into realms of an all-pervading expanse of 'Emptiness'. Standing still , one will find this subtle and 'Mighty Emptiness', the omnipresent Ether, *Akasha*, paradoxically unfolding (itself) within one's own self where, after all, Truth is enshrined.

The *Bhagavad Gita* again, in a slightly different context though, points to the light of all lights, wisdom and object of wisdom, being seated in the hearts of all—

ज्योतिषामपि तज्जयोति: तमस: परमुच्यते।
ज्ञांन ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं, हृदि सर्वस्य धिष्ठितम्।।

—BG—13/17

This, then, is what Bhagavaan Ji actually realized not so long ago, and would fain have us learn, emphasizing the significance of 'what lies within us'. which for the wise, is the pathway to the Path— '...महाजनोयेनगत: सपंथ :...'

All that would seem required of the seeker, therefore, is an ardent desire to discover and to know. And this important trait when coupled with an acute sensitivity of perception and determination, must doubtless go far to take the pilgrim to the craved for target. These, in fact, constitute the essential qualification, the *sine qua non*, for what distinguishes this exceptional *genre* from the humdrum, the coarse, the flabby, the obscure and the foggy.

And what have you next ?—the dawn of a state of blissful awakening where sleep and slumber vanish. No dissipations or diversions or any deflections are brooked. And seeds of spiritual priority begin to take firm roots leading to an uprush of Divinity with a simultaneous rejection of all bodily needs and comforts, as of little value. Now and then, a glimpse of the 'Divine Tempter' within is caught, howsoever fleetingly, which is fuel enough to stoke the fire burning inside. The yearning within grows uncontrollably, sending up the flames of one's only passion, in a galloping consumption. The prospect of beholding the 'beloved'

hovers alternately between hope and despair. But then the pursuit has become immutable—its intensity growing day and night.

One finds much joy in staking his all, in yoking oneself exclusively with the unceasing Quest.

And that is exactly what occupied Bhagavaan Ji's whole attention—not minding the stunning exertions involved. With an entire life-process totally dedicated to realize and give expression to the as yet dimly perceived marvel of an entity, elusive yet everlasting and eternal 'that lies within us', as Emerson too sensed and spoke about without ambiguity. And some time, in a surcharged state of mind such a one will pour himself out with abandon in a mood of ectasy—

जो मस्त हैं अज़ल के, इन्हें शराब क्या है?
हर दम की हम निशीनी, फिर यह हिजाब क्या है!

No more rest and no extraneous concerns for him now ; both are taboo. Indulgence is barred. Restraint is self-imposed and a lone overriding passion possesses him and takes him on and on and on! He is out on a cruise all alone ; on a voyage of discovery in formidable and roaring waters to experience 'what lies within'. The effort is Herculean. And while clasping tenaciously the raft that will 'take him across', he dares whatever may come to impede or deter, to keep it right on course in spite of baffling winds out to thwart the sacred mission. But lo and behold! Sooner than later our Champion romps home and the bewildering struggle is ultimately crowned with success. He is now made privy to the 'Kingly secret'—'...राजविद्या राज गुह्यम् पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम्...' spoken of in the *Bhagavad Gita* (9/2). And the glorious kingdom 'that lies within' stands revealed to him in its entirety. The moment of coronation of the pilgrim has arrived, finally. The victorious Veteran, the Superman, stands out from the rest, shining with a soft radiance like the Morning Star on the azure vault of the vast skies above. And there he is, the enlightened one, living with us for ever. Yes, living for us as one 'Not to be forgot'. Never, indeed! His world not ended but living in us with His vision spanning the whole Universe.

The pen-portrait drawn above, dear reader, ought to be clear—whom else should this reference pertain to if not the one who fits in eloquently with the description, ante ? Who else but our Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Himself—whose birth centenary we are commemorating today, whose unquestionable greatness and grandeur has inspired this eulogy meant as a humble offering.

Today as we stand in the midst of these celebrations, it is just as it should be that several luminaries belonging to this *genre* should simultaneously appear on the canvas of our mental horizon. There we find, in bright view, a band of sages—pioneers rising majestically far above the lowly, like lofty mountain peaks carrying on their broad bosom a shimmering glacier of profound knowledge and wisdom. Unreachable for their sheer stature and eminence, they fill us with awe and reverence again as personages 'Not to be forgot'. Salutations to them now and again.

On an occasion like Bhagavaan Ji's centenary celebration, one should quite naturally be found tuned more to the subtle than the temporal affairs and interests. It is only to be expected, therefore, that there is an urge to score here and there the tip of that 'glacier of knowledge and wisdom' that now lies bared before our mental vision. Never mind, if one is not able to penetrate far inside its surface or explore the same extensively. Yet the rich fare that is still available in the shape of attractive rills that flow down from it, gliding their way in joyous abandon as if out on an excursion, would be found abundantly sufficient and enough to satiate the hearts craving for more and more of the ambrosia all the time.

For today's intellectual treat, dear reader, may we draw from some select pieces of great literary charm and philosophical content from the pen of one of the great poets of all time, Master Zinda Kaul, a marvel of a poet, of unparalleled excellence in his own right, who epitomizes a grand synthesis of a fertile and sublime imagination with the gift of a captivating expression. Verily he is a poet relevant to all times and climes, one who is for ever and living eternally—"Zinda-i-Javed" as my own Dad Pandit Janaki Nath Bakshi, a close associate and ardent admirer of "Masterji", sort of a variant of Samuel Johnson's Boswell, liked to write of him, so fondly.

Befitting the coming occasion of Navreh (New Year) now almost here—may we begin with the first dainty helping, some delightful excerpts from his poem on the New Year 'नो'व वरिह' rendered into English as "The Holy Song of Life" by one of Master Ji's admirers, the well known Mrs. Nila Cramcook—

O, come, my Comrade, and enjoy the Spring !
This New Year day, a fresh wine let's drink
And every hatred and unpleasant thing
Forget, and kind thoughts may we think
And words and deeds be gracious ! Be we friends
Again, and leave behind us last year's strife
The New Year Festival this message sends :
A new leaf in the Holy Gita, life !

As we can see, the English rendering is remarkably beautiful in itself, particularly useful for those not conversant with the Kashmiri Language, and leaves the reader well impressed. Incidentally, it also speaks eloquently for what the original in Kashmiri must read like—

यदि भायव अऽस्य ति बागस मंज़ समव,
नो'व वऽरिह छावव त नविरुक मस चमव।

प्राऽन्य मऽशिरित गोस, नो'व मे'त्रुत करव।
रुत व्यच़ारव रुत बनव, तय रुत करव।

नो'व वऽरिह गव जिन्दगाऽनी नऽव करुॅन्य,
ज़न्मुॅचे गीताय नऽव अघ्या परुॅन्य।।

How clear and simply expressed is the New Year's message which the poet succeeds in conveying forcefully without any hiccups. The style is natural and simple which actually comes of great skill. And yet the effect is marked and made quite telling.

Like all good things that must come to an end sometime, this topic of discussion too has to end now. However, to avoid an abrupt ending and to accommodate those genuinely wanting to have a little more to taste, one may quote a few lines from another

masterpiece of the Poet—"Ferryman, take me across" (करनावि तारखना.....)

ये'ति साख़िय दय मोनमुत, कुन दातुॅ स्वामी माऽज मोल,
सो'खुॅ बाऽय्य तारख विज़ियव, त्राऽविथ भरान तऽस्य ओत लोल,
पयि निशि न डलवन्य ओर योर, ज़ुव छुम भ्रमान गछ्ॅहा बु. तोर–
करनरिव तारख ना अपोर!

And, again—

ये'ति कांहन वदनावान शुर्यन
ये'ति देविये मानान त्रियन,
ये'ति कूर गो'बरस खोतुॅ टाऽठ
ये'ति नोश न काहं कर्मस दुॅयन
ये'ति माय स्नेह वुज़नस चो'पाऽरय
ज़ुव छुम भ्रमान गछ्ॅहा बुॅ तोर
करनावि तारख ना अपोर:

Translated by Masterji, it reads:

Where no one makes children cry,
Where women are regarded
As manifestations of the Mother,
And daughters are loved
Even more than sons—
And no daughter-in-law mourns her lot.
Where love and brotherly affection
Bubble up everywhere—
Please, ferryman, do take me across.

The above poem, briefly excerpted herein is reminiscent of the famous lines of another great Poet, TAGORE :

Where the mind is without fear
And the head is held high

....

Where the world has not been
Broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls

....

Into that heaven of freedom
My father, let my country awake ;

Both the poems stand out for their lofty content as for the matchless beauty of expression. Masterji's concern for the true welfare of the individual and society is abiding and uppermost in his mind. Besides being a true mystic of a high order, he is a Poet *par excellence*, divinely human, who cannot bear to remain indifferent to man's woes and the ills of society or just keep aloof to be content with his own contentment.

SPIRITUALITY AND SAINTHOOD

—R. K. Langar

Spirituality is the backbone of Hinduism. It aims at living life in the highest consciousness, involving maximum awareness. In its absolute sense it is that illumined state of existence which one attains after realising one's identity with God. In the relative sense it means to live a life that leads to God-realisation and aims at recognising the divine principle in us, attaining therby the realisation that the same divine principle exists in every one, that man is not only body but a combination of body and soul, the *Atman*, the self. The soul or *Atman* is present in all and that accounts for the basic *Vedantic* principle of unity in diversity. We generally identify ourselves with body-mind complex and thus live in spiritual ignorance. When we rise above the body-mind idea, our outlook on life gains in largeness and depth.

There is one definition of spirituality given by Sri Aurobindo, the great twentieth century spiritual philosopher of India. He says that spirituality is not high intellectuality or idealism, nor moral purity, nor austerity. It is an inner aspiration, to know, to feel and to enter into contact with the greater reality beyond, pervading this universe. Aurobindo further says that spirituality is to feel divine, think divine and see divine. Sri Ramkrishna Paramahansa, another great saint of India, told his disciple, Swami Vivekananda, that he had seen God, talked to God in the same manner as "I see you". The Gita says “remember me at all times and fight”. Gandhiji says that though he has not seen God, he gets a feeling that he is getting closer to God day by day.

India has produced a number of spiritual leaders. Some of the important ones are Shankaracharya, Ramanujam, Madhavacharya, Guru Nanak, Sri Chaitanya and in the more recent times we have Aurobindo, Rama Krishna Paramahansa, Maharishi Ramana, Swami Vivekananda, Lal Ded and Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji. The list includes world famous spiritual leaders and if you closely study their teachings you will find that they speak the same language as far as spirituality is concerned.

Spirituality can also be defined as Truth, yoga, mysticism, sufiism, wisdom, a state of liberation. It is not something which is other-worldly. It is the science of self. Lord Krishna says in the *Gita* that "of all the sciences, I am the science of self". More than 2000 years ago the great Greek philosopher Plato had said that the best science is the science of self. Another Western saint Augustine says that the goal of man is to achieve complete union with God, which is also what yoga aims at. So it is quite clear that the western concept of spirituality is not at all different from what the Indian philosophy maintains: spirituality is more than goodness.

Morality is the backbone of the Indian spiritual life. To attain oneness with God one has to become perfect like God with moral virtues. The *Gita* gives a list of the moral virtues which when acquired signify one's attainment of knowledge. Some of these are purity of mind, non-attachment, absence of egoism, nonviolence, humility, dispassion. *Patanjali* in his *Ashtanga Yoga* states that the eight limbs of yoga are like the eight steps of a ladder which are to be gone through in ascending order to achieve union with the Supreme. The first two steps of this yoga are *Yama* meaning abstention from evil doings and *Niyama* meaning observance of virtues. It is quite obvious that to achieve *Samadhi*, which is the highest state of consciousness, one has to be morally upright. We cannot afford to be immoral if we want to become spiritual.

It is a very wrong belief, a misconception, that spirituality is not meant for the common man. Spiritual understanding is open to all those who are self-disciplined and aware of the Divine. A spiritual outlook is most needed for a country like India where there are a number of religions and within a religion different sects. The customs and traditions also differ in our country from one State to another. Therefore a spiritual outlook, which is not antagonistic to a secular outlook, has to be acquired so as to have the perception of unity in all diversities.

Can one be spiritual without being religious ? Dalai Lama maintains that one can be spiritual without being religious. The blessed souls are spiritually awakened from very young age such as Shankracharya, Maharishi Ramana, Sri Ramkrishna Paramahansa. But for the rest of us it is essential that we follow our religion in order to cultivate moral virtues and spirituality in ourselves.

Kashmir has produced a number of saints and we remember Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji today whose birth centenary we have been celebrating this year. He was truth, purity, simplicity personified. He was a Jivan *Mukta*, a liberated man in the real sense. Though he is believed to have practised Kashmir Shaivism, he was also greatly impressed by the *Gita* about which he once remarked that "a sloka of this text could serve an aspirant as *Guru Upadesh*". From this it follows that Shaivism and Vedanta are essentially no different as far as spirituality is concerned. Bhagavaan Gopi Nath Ji had erased his ego completely. He never used the word 'I' but instead 'We'. He said that God realisation depends upon one's own efforts plus divine grace. He took the problems of others as his own and solved them with his spiritual powers.

Conclusion :

The world today is facing a spiritual crisis that has resulted from the tremendous advancement of science and technology. In today's life material progress has to be matched by people's spiritual well being. In today's world order, India as the land of spirituality has to show the path to the whole world through her own moral and spiritual regeneration.

KASHMIR : VEDIC GOD SURYA AND BHAGAVAAN GOPINATH

—S. L. Shali

Surrounded by exquisite natural scenery, superb formation of land and enchanting environment, the seers and saints of Kashmir have tried to do away with evil—in deed and thought—, overcome turbulence of the body and soul, and have thus experienced the inner reality. Living like ordinary house-holders, they stripped off everything external and discovered Nature's gifts within themselves and thus realized the eternal, infinite divine power as identical with the *Atman*.

The verdant Valley with its light and shade, clouds and sunshine, dawns and sunsets and other atmospheric changes had a moving effect on the seekers of truth. In the month of September, 1957, the then Deputy Director General of Archaeology Govt. of India Dr. B. C. Chhabra, a known orientalist, linguist, epigraphist and a reputed Sanskrit scholar, visited Pahalgam. On the following morning when he came out of his tent, 'dawn' (Vedic *Usha*) brightened by the rising sun was looking over the picturesque bosom of the valley. Its natural beauty was further enhanced in the glory of the spectacular and conical peaks of pineclad mountains, cool breeze and murmuring sound of the river Liddar at the rear. He concentrated on the glory of the sky, the sun and the salubrious atmosphere all around and enthusiastically exclaimed, "Ah, it is here where the *Vedas* could have been written". His constant gaze on the sun made him to forget the external elements and he was lost in supreme bliss. Later he exressed that he experienced wonderful moments of transparent mind, which became as pure as a crystal. The devotee prays to the rising sun to declare him sinless, to Varuna, the imperial Ruler, Indra, the god of the Thunderbolt, Agni, the god of Fire and other gods. The rising sun discloses every thing that has been done in the darkness of the previous night (R. V. VII. 60.1 and 62.2). Since the Vedic times, the sun has been, in particular, worshipped for the removal of sins and as the bestower of riches, food, fame, health and other

blessings. Again the *Rigveda* (I. 115. 1) maintains that the sun is the soul of movable and immovable things. It is identified as Aditya or Brahman from whom all beings originate. Seeing him and his orb, brings supreme bliss to the devotee.

The worship of Surya, the Vedic god, was prevalent from very early times in Kashmir. The god is worshipped in all types of domestic rituals where the first offering is made to him, invoking him as the embodiment of Dharma and a witness of the good actions of the devotee. He held a prominent position in the Valley even in prehistoric times. When society was not marked by any religious convictions and there was total absence of temples or shrines, even then the people looked to the sun as their benefactor. Ascribable to neolithic period (3000 B. C.), a stone slab with two motifs of the Sun-god with radiating rays was encountered during the course of the excavations (IAR, 1970) at Burzahom, a known neolithic site of the Valley. It depicts the life style of those people who depended on hunting, fishing and fowling. The sun motifs at the top indicate the rising and setting sun, since on its movements and presence in the sky depended the success of hunting.

In the subsequent period (1000 B. C.), massive stones called Megaliths or Menhirs were installed which were meant for knowing the movements of the sun. Contrary to what the position is elsewhere in India or outside where such stones are commemorative stones raised in memory of the distinguished dead, here at Burzahom, or at other sites of identical nature in the Valley, no such remains have come to light. With enormous man-power, they were raised in honour of the sun-god and accordingly they are purely ceremonial in character. Their installation near habitations helped people to know the movements of the sun and the variation of its shade projected through these standing stones proved beneficial to them in the safe execution of their day to day work.

The Sakas and Kushanas who ruled the valley in the early years of the Chrisitian era, looked to the sun as a popular deity. On some of Kanishka's coins, there is a figure with the name 'Mitra' or Mihira which is the Sanskritised form of the Persian Mihra, a corruption of Mithra, the Avestic form of the Vedic Mitra. The

Buddhist pilgrims who came into the Valley during the period of Karkotas (A. D. 627-939) maintained that the rulers were zealous worshippers of Vishnu who had his origin in the Vedic god, the Sun.

The most powerful and liberal king of the dynasty, Lalitaditya Muktapada, was an enthusiastic worshipper of the Sun-god. Though he equally revered and patronised the then prevailing religions, Hinduism as practised by the Brahmins, and Buddhism, yet he showed particular interest in the worship of the sun, which marked the religious consciousness of the people of the succeeding periods as well. Lalitaditya built the shrine of the Sun-god Aditya in his own town of Lalitapura (modern Litpore). Again a massive and a wonderful temple was built by him in the name of the Sun-god Martanda which is known for its expert technical perfection so much so that it became a model for all Brahmanical temples in Kashmir. This great temple complex carried niches, figures and side structures which were built in strict accordance with the ceremonial purposes of Sun-worship. Even after Lalitaditya there was increased religious fervour for adoration of the Sun-god. King Suravarman II (A. D. 939) proceeded on the seventh day of the bright half of Ashadh to visit the temple of the sun-god, Jayasvamin, built earlier by Pravarsena II at the foot of the Hariparbat fort in Srinagar, now occupied by the Ziarat of Baha-ud-Din Sahib. This day is still being celebrated by the Kashmiris. Sun symbols with radiating rays are drawn in various hues in the compound or in the corridor of the ground floor of the house on this day so as to invoke the god for a happy and prosperous year for the inmates of the house. Any kind of disrespect to the god had to be heavily paid for by the defaulter. Kalhana records that Kashmirian King Kalasa (A. D. 1063-1089) disregarded the rules of conduct when he destroyed the copper image of Surya in one of the celebrated shrines. Immediately after this sacrilegious action of his, blood gushed out of his nose and despite application of numerous medications, it would not stop. His health waned and he was confined to bed. To save his life, he took refuge in the Sun-temple Martanda and presented a golden image at the feet of the Lord here. Again his son, the dissolute king Harsha (1089-1101) destroyed all the images of gods and godesses but spared the Surya image at Martanda so as to avoid the misfortune his father had to face due

to the disrespect shown to that god (R. T. VII. 696, 709, 715 and 1096). Such was the great devotion of the people to this god.

Surya, the sun-god, illuminates not only the world all over, but instils eternal bliss into the heart of the earnest devotee. All kinds of impurities are removed from the mind and he becomes pure with the grace of the sun. Even while moving around or talking with people, he remains always absorbed in the serenity of his inner consciousness, realising thereby the blissful state of universal oneness. With freedom from passions, he moves towards liberation and divine perfection. Fortunately, in our times, this is what Bhagavaan Gopinath manifested before us: greatness, supremacy, spiritual attainment and God-realisation through continued remembrance of the Sun-god.

Bhagavaan Gopinath's adoration of the Sun was visualised on the 10th day ceremony of a deceased relative of his, Pt. Damodhar Parimoo. Like all others who participated in the ceremony (including the present writer), he too stood in the line till the son of the deceased went twice from one end to the other. During this process, Bhagavaanji did not look towards any of us, or even to the ground or the sides or talk to any one, not even the members of the household but gazed upwards towards the illuminating sun. His face had a blissful lustre and was free of fear, sorrow or attachment. He got infinite joy 'Ananda' through the gracious rays of the Sun. He had a devout and positive attitude towards the Vedic god, Surya, the embodiment of indescribable bliss and the means to the attainment of *Sahaja Samadhi* (natural super-consciousness).

In the early days of his extraordinary *sadhana* Bhagavaanji could get in touch with other blissful and exalted souls as himself at his own sweet will. One afternoon, my uncle (MK) went to have a chat with him at his grocer's shop at Sekidafar near the Idgah bridge just outside the house of our close neighbour (Parimoo) where he was staying at that time. After some time, a holy man passed by the shop and Bhagavaanji followed him, asking my uncle to remain in the shop till he returned. Hours passed and it began getting dark but the Bhagavaan did not return. Naturally, my uncle got anxious possibly not about Bhagavaanji's welfare, but he wanted

to get himself relieved. Entrusting the responsibility of the shop to some one else, he marched towards Idgah. In the centre of its vast area, he found the *sadhu* sitting on flat topped stone boulder and Bhagavaanji himself sitting on the ground wholly absorbed in conversation on *para vairagya* (supreme dispassion). Spotting him and coming near him 'MK' in a loud and angry voice shouted at him saying how careless he had been in putting him incharge of the shop without any thought of relieving him and also not bothering about the sale of goods to the customers. 'MK' did not know that Bhagavaanji was in an exalted state of yogic expenence. Hearing the unwanted cry of M. K. he was thunder-struck and replied in stiff tone, "Oh MK, how cruel you have been ? why did you come ? You have betrayed me". From this it is clear as to how exalted a soul he was. While he was experienceing Supreme joy in the company of another realised soul, he had no love for unspiritual worldly objects. He had no attachment to his shop, nor cared for the sale transactions nor had he any idea of relieving the person kept incharge of the shop. This incident tells us a lot about Bhagavaanji's spiritual advancement even when he ran a shop and looked a man of the world.

Certainly it would have been more beneficial to mankind if the spiritual eminence of this great saint had been projected during his life-time itself. Most of us could thus have been the recipients of his divine grace. Saints of his ilk very rarely make their appearance in this transitory world of ours.

A PEEP INTO ABHINAVAGUPTA'S TANTRALOKA

—Prof. Koshalya Walli

The *Tantraloka* by Acarya Abhinavagupta happens to be the Epitome of Kashmir Saivism. Each one of us, sooner or later in the tenure of his life, experiences, even if just for a moment, a special feeling of emptiness despite position, power, wealth, fame, name and all material comforts. That special moment of one's life is a blessing, as that very moment helps us to open the knots of life's mystery, making us direct our senses inward to get wise about the meaning and mystery of life. The *Tantraloka* helps us to perceive the destination from the spot where we are, where we stand.

It comprises thirty seven chapters termed (AHNIKAS). The first chapter starts with an earnest prayer by Acharya Abhinavagupta to the Ultimate (known as Parama Siva as per Kashmir Saiva terminology), to enable his heart to be filled what *Saiva Samavesa* i.e. to be established in Parama Siva—that is beyond time and space[1]. Also, in the very first *sloka* of the *Tantraloka*, the author, deviating from tradition, introduces us to his parents. The fact is that the *sloka* can be interpreted in several ways. One meaning is that the name of Abhinavaguptacarya's mother was Vimala and that of his father was Narasimhagupta (see note 1under 'Notes & References' given at the end). The author, as he begins his gigantic work *Tantraloka,* equips himself with the Divine Will-Power Sakti *Samavesa,* meaning identification with the *iccha Sakti.* In the Xth and XIth slokas, the author introduces us to a galaxy of his teachers. Somananda is the author of *Sivadrsti.* Utpaladeva is its commentator. Laksamanagupta is the son, as also the disciple of Utpalacarya. Mahamaheswara Abhinavagupta is the wise disciple of Laksamanagupta[2].

Abhinava's father was known by the name of Cukhulaka also. The son is proud of his father who also happens to be his teacher[3]. In the 16th sloka the celebrated author says that he has grasped the wisdom imparted to him by his teachers. True knowledge has become part and parcel of his being. Everything else, apart from the path shown to him by his teachers, is poison—

a bondage. He straight-away says that he can do away with this bondage—this poison—by writing what he aptly characterizes as the Epitome of Kashmir Saivism—*TANTALOKA*[4], according to which ignorance is the cause of this world. Knowledge is the main and one means of the attainment of Emancipation (MOKSA).[5]

Ignorance means not want of knowledge but incomplete knowledge[6]. *Vikalpa* always creates difference. It is known as AKHYATI in teachnical terminology[7]. Intellectual ignorance is always problematic. Possibility of *Vikalpa* is always due to intellectual ignorance.

Effulgent Siva is the Ultimate Element to be known.[8]. Iswara is the form of Wisdom (बोधरूप)[9]. Light uniformly shines everywhere. Its real nature is not hidden, can't be hidden, hence no need of PRAMANAS[10].

Parma Siva is occupied with *Swatantrya Sakti*—Power of freedom and is its Embodiment[11]. Paramasiva's *Swatantrya* is His Main *Aiswarya*[12]. To be an Embodiment of *Swatantrya Sakti* denotes His Limitless Power[13]. Sakti is a means to attain Siva[14]. He creates., maintains, destroys, enfolds and unfolds. Enfolding (तिरोधान) comes under maintenance (स्थिति) and unfolding (अनुग्रह) comes under destruction (संहार)[15]. He is called Bhairava (भैरव) for He is the Creator and the Nourisher of the whole creation[16]. *Swatantrya Sakti* is the Innate genius of Parama Siva. He is an Embodiment of Power to do, undo, or do otherwise. Sobriety can be termed as the one shore and Frightfulness as the other, resulting in a limited circumference. This is called the wheel of currents of *SAMVIT*—an object of worship/meditation[17].

Every one is in the know of the fact that the final aim of life is Emacipation or 'Moksa'. What is *Moksa* ? According to Abhinavaguptacarya, emancipation is nothing but the expansion of one's own Real Self[18]. Real knowledge of the self is *MOKSA*[19]. For a person established in thoughtless 'VIKALPAS', thoughts are useless. As a result he soon knows the object of knowledge[20]. When self-knowledge is established in choiceless awareness, it can be termed as a state of *Samavesa*[21]. Identification with Awareness is *SAMAVESA*[22]. In the situation of thoughtlessness (अविकल्पावस्था), identification with Siva is known as *Sambhava Samavesa*

(शाम्भवसमावेश)—to be established in Siva[23].

Reaching the destination depends on the interest and capability of the path-finder and the goal- seeker. There are four paths to reach the Ultimate—*Sambhavopaya, Saktopaya, Anavopaya* and *Anupaya*. *Sambhavopya* is *Abheda* dominant, *Saktopaya* is *Bhedabhedadominant* and *Anavopaya* is *Bheda* dominant[24]. Action is interwined with knowledge and wisdom[25].

True knowledge is one of the means for the attainment of liberation[26]. It is on account of Siva's *Swatantrya* that we find the play of teacher and taught, providing the basis for Guru and Sisya relationship[27]. Complete reunification is known as Perfection[28]. Ignorannce is darkness[29]. *Bhavas* (ideas, feelings) are always conscious[30].

The second chapter of the *Tantraloka* deals with *Anupaya*. *Anupaya* is no *upaya* in itself. With the Grace of Paramasiva, Upayas are the source of enlightenment. When serious truth-seekers listen to the utterances of their teachers such as "I am self-Effulgent Parama Siva. I manifest myself. I appear in the form of the Universe", they form firm conviction and without any argument become established in the Self, wisdom and Enlightenment. This is the significance of the *Anupaya* science[31]. The deepest *Saktipata* grace of the Almighty purifying the souls and making them immersed in the worship of *Bhairviya Swatmasamvid*—leads to realization of self without taking resort to any upaya (NIRUPAYA)[32]. *Samvid* is the means to enlighten *Kriya*[33]. Hence it is said that Kriya yoga is not only produced from *Anupayasamvittattvam*. *Samvid* is the source to enlighten KRIYA (see note 33 at the end). Since all upayas, external and internal, depend upon the power of *Samvid*, without which these can't be proved, how can Upayas be the reason of *Samvid* without which means can't be proved[34].

PRAKASA is Siva's own body[35]. Imitating other's form without leaving one's form is known as *PRATIBIMBATMAKTA*[36]. The powers of Maheswara comprise this universe. The powerful is Maheswara[37]. In creation, vowles are the basic cause of all the letters[38]. A *siddha* yogi established in sustained NIRVIKALPA SAMADHi attains emancipation called *Jivanmukti* (जीवनमुक्ति)[39].

Ahnika IV deals with *Sakta Upaya*. When one trains one's good habits in the art of victorious psychological warfare then and then only arises the desire to enter into the kingdom of God. Deep study of *Sastras* helps us in properly directing our *Samskaras* towards our spiritual goal[40].

Swatma Samvitti does not depend on anyone. It is power dependent on its own. Nothing is to be done away with and nothing is to be included in the context of *Swatmasavitti*. This is a perfectly complete, free and Independant power[41]. Paramasiva is an expert in the play of Hiding Himself[42].

Leaning towards God is the result of *Saktipata*— Unconditional Grace of Parama Siva. Sequence (KRAMA) is essential in this grace. At the outset a *Sadhaka* may resort to a wrong path. He may be in touch with an *Asadguru* and may be lost and confused in the wilderness of scriptures. Slowly, the *Sadhaka* comes on the right track on account of *Rudra Samavesa* (being established in Rudra), studies *Saiva Sastra* and attains a *Saiva Guru*[43].

There are three means to know Parama Siva devoid of *Maya* — (1) GURU (2) SASTRA (3) Self. The second is superior to the first and the third is superior to the second. Guru is the means to attain the knowledge of the *Sastras*. The latter are the means to attain knowledge. Self-knowledge attained by self is the best[44]. One's own senses and tendencies when directed from the inward are transformed into divine powers. One earns excellence in the field of knowledge and action resulting in perfection in one's free power to do or undo[45].

'*Swatah jnata Pramata*' is the best. One who is the object of the highest grace is known as *Samsiddhika Guru* or *Akalpita Guru*[46]. That *Samsidhika Sadhaka*, being a knower of the Sastras, if not perfect, is called *Akalpitakalpita* Guru. He repeatedly says: "I am the same *paramahamsa*". On the basis of his *bhavana*, he treats himself as "Hamsa" and is known as *Kalpitakalpaka*[47].

According to Sri Sarvavira Sastra, a *Sadhaka* resorts to the search for Sivahood, by dint of his own will. Parameswara Siva blesses such a *Sadhaka* with devotion, good deeds, knowledge and

wisdon, with spiritual utterances, *mantras* and initiation. Parameswara is the cause of the beginningless world and is unconditionally Merciful to the creation. Through His *Swatantrya* He frees the bound *jeevas* by His own will[48].

By the *Swatma Sambodha Sadhana*—the practice of knowing well one's Real Self—whatever knowledge a *Sadhaka* desires to attain is known as *Tattvajnana—summum bonum* of knowledge. The characteristic of a true teacher, in the path of self-realization, is to be equipped with true perfect wisdom[49].

Acharya Jayaratha—an able commentator of the *Tantraloka*—quotes *Brahmayamala* and says that knowledge of the Real Essence is the characteristic of a true Guru. He quotes other *sastras* wherein it is said that a Guru equipped with true knowledge of self is the best teacher, even if he is devoid of all the characteristics befitting a Guru[50].

According to *Brahmayamala*, a doubtful mind does not succeed. In reality *samsaya* (doubt) is '*Vikalpa*'[51]. By removing doubt, one becomes thoughtless. If incessant *japa* does not help directly, one's own self can be the Guru. One can experience that the soul devoid of doubt is everything. Such true knowledge dawns automatically upon the *sadhaka* concerned[52].

According to Abhinavaguptacarya, deep study of *Sastras* and a real grasp of the same help and strengthen self-confidence and enhance self-development and self-awareness of a *Sadhaka*. Such wisdom is perfect in itself. Such supreme wisdom amounts to direct knowledge of the Ultimate[53].

Knowledge comes from three things: one's own self, scriptures and Guru; hence it is called TRITYA *Jnana*[54].

According to Jayaratha, one's mind should be engrossed in the ultimate Truth[55].

Parameswara everywhere is pure, established in the *Paramarsa* of *Swatmabhava* i.e. in the awareness of his own freedom[56]. Because of the Omniscience of the Ultimate, Omniscient *parasakti* is 'VIMARSA'[57]. As such, awareness of

one's Real Self is one's *Swatantrya.*

The attainment of the Highest *Paramasivabhava* means to be established in the Ultimate. This is known as *Tanmayibhava* (to be merged in That).[58] This is perfection. In this state, there remains no other desire. No desire for fruit, even in imagination, remains there.

A yogi of the *Tantraloka* has to be devoid of any thought (VIKALPA), established in his own self[59]. The *Tantraloka* defines purity and impurity in its own way. To be one with 'LIGHT' is purity. To be apart from the same is impurity[60]. One having an innate desire to enter the Highest Element must stablize one's mind[61]. One having an invincible faith in one's own self becomes one with that. Such a fortunate one knows *Paramasiva* in all completeness[62].

The unconditional Grace of God helps one to become established in That Ultimate, like the bee that tastes *Ketaki* flower. An ordinary fly fails even to think of the said flower[63].

To conclude, man is essentially born in the image of God. Man ultimately is God Himself—This is the message of the *Tantraloka.*

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. विमलकलाश्रयाभिनवसृष्टिमहाजननी
   भरिततनुश्च पञ्चमुखगुप्तरुचिर्जनक :।
   तदुभययामलस्फुरितभावविसर्गमयं
   हृदयमनुत्तरामृतकुलं मम संस्फुरतात्।। T.A.I.
2. श्रीसोमानन्दबोधश्रीमदुत्पलविनि : सृता :।
   जयन्ति संविदामोदसन्दर्भा दिक्प्रसर्पिण :।।
   तदास्वादभरावेशबृंहितां मतिषट्पदीम्।
   गुरोर्लक्ष्मणगुप्तस्य नादसंमोहिनीं नुम :।। T.A.I, 10-11.
3. गुरुभ्योऽपि गरीयांसं जनकं चुखुलाभिधम्।। *Bhasya* T.A.I.12.

4. श्रीभट्टनाथचरणाब्जयुगात्तथा
श्रीभट्टारिकांघ्रियुगलाद्गुरुसन्ततिर्या।
बोधान्यपाशविषनुत्तदुपासनोत्थ–
बोधोज्जवलोऽभिनवगुप्त इदं करोति।। T.A. I.16

5. इह तावत्समस्तेषु शास्त्रेषु परिगीयते।
अज्ञानं संसृतेर्हेतुर्ज्ञानं मोक्षैककारणम्।।

6. तद्युक्तमुक्तज्ञानशब्दस्य अपूर्णं ज्ञानमर्थ इति।। T.A.I.25 (*Bhasya*)

7. 'धीगतस्य' इति अज्ञानस्य। विकल्पो हि भेदप्रथात्मक : स चैव अख्यातिरूपत्वादज्ञानम् इति बहूक्तम्।। T.A. I.48.

8. ज्ञेयस्य हि परमतत्त्वं य : प्रकाशात्मक : शिव :।। T.A.I.52.

9. "बोधात्मभूत ईश्वर एवं"।। T.A. I.53. (*Bhasya*)

10. प्रकाशो नाम यश्चायं सर्वत्रैव प्रकाशते।
अनपह्नवनीयत्वात् किं तस्मिनमानकल्पनै :।। T.A.I.54.

11. तेन स्वातन्त्रयशक्त्यैव युक्त.... T.A. I. 67

12. 'स्वातन्त्र्यमेतन्मुख्यं तदैश्वर्यं परमात्मन :'। T.A. 1.67 (*Bhasya)*

13. बहुशक्तित्वमप्यस्य तच्छक्त्यैवावियुक्तता। T.A. I. 68

14. "शिवप्राप्त्युपायतया शक्तिरेव" T.A.I. 74 (*Bhasya*)

15. सृष्टिस्थितितिरोधानसंहारानुग्रहादि च। T.A. 1.79.

16. भैरव इति गुरुभिरिमैरन्वर्थै : संस्तुत : शास्त्रे। T.A. 1.100.

17. एकस्य संविन्नाथस्य ह्यान्तरी प्रतिभा तनु :।
सौम्यं वान्यन्मितं संविदूर्मिचक्रमुपास्यते।। T.A. I.116.

18. मोक्षो हि नाम नैवान्य : स्वरूपप्रथनं हि तत्।। T.A.I. 156

19. यतश्चात्मप्रथा मोक्ष:......
'ज्ञानमेव विमोक्षाय'..... T.A.1.161. (*Bhasya*)

20. अकिञ्चिच्चिकस्येति विकल्पानुपयोगिता।
तथा च झटिति ज्ञेयसमापत्तिर्निरूप्यते।। T.A. 1.171.

21. आवेशश्चास्वतन्त्रस्य स्वतद्रपनिमज्जनात्।।
परतद्रूपता शम्भोराद्याच्छक्त्यविभागिन :। T.A. 1.173.

22. बोधैकात्म्यमेव समावेशार्थ इति युक्तमुक्तम्। T.A. I. 177. (*Bhasya*)

23. तेनाविकल्पा संवित्तिभावनाद्यनपेक्षिणी।।
शिवतादात्म्यमापन्ना समावेशो न शाम्भव :। T.A. I. 178.

24. अभेदोपायमत्रोक्तं शाम्भवं शाक्तमुच्यते
भेदाभेदात्मकोपायं भेदोपायं तदाणवम्। T.A. I. 230.

25. क्रिया हि नाम विज्ञानान्नान्यद्वस्तुक्रमात्मताम्।
उपायवशत : प्राप्तं तत्क्रियेति पुरोदितम्।। T.A.I. 232.
'यतो नान्या क्रिया नाम'

26. सम्यग्ज्ञानं च मुक्त्येककारणम्।। T.A.I.233.

27. स्वयमेद विबोधश्च तथा प्रश्नोत्तरात्मक :।
गुरुशिष्यपदेऽप्येष देहभेदोह्यतात्त्विक :। T.A.I. 256.

28. सम्बन्ध : परत चास्य पूर्णेकात्म्यप्रथामयी।। T.A.I. 275.

29. मिथ्याज्ञानं तिमिरम्...... T.A.I. 331.

30. भावानां हि वस्तुतश्चैतन्यमेव रूपम् अचेत्यमानत्वे हि
तेषां किमपि रूपं न स्यात्।। T.A.I.332. (*Bhasya*)

31. उपायैर्न शिवो भाति, भान्ति ते प्रसादत :। स एवाहं स्वप्रकाशो भासे विश्वरूपक :।
इत्याकर्रय गुरोवाक्यं सकृत् केचन् निश्चिता :। बिना भयोऽनुसन्धानं भान्ति संविन्मया :
स्थिता :। T.A. II. 2.

32. तत्र ये निर्मलमात्मानो भैरवीयां स्वसंविदम्।
निरुपायमुपासीनास्तद्विधि : प्रणिगद्यते।। T.A.II. 7.

33. तत्र तावत्क्रियायोगो नाभ्युपायत्वमर्हति।
स हि तस्मात्समुद्भूत : प्रत्युत् प्रविभाव्यते।। T.A.II.8.

34. यावानुपाये बाह्या : स्यादन्तरो वापि कश्चन।
स सर्वस्तन्मुखप्रेक्षी तत्रोपायत्वभाव कथम्।। T.a.II.11.

35. तत् प्रकाशतामात्रं शिवस्यैव निजं वपुः। T.A. II. 15.
प्रकाश : केवल : शिव :। T.A. II. 16.
प्रकाशवपुरेवायं भासते परमेश्वर :। T.A.II.18

36. स्वरूपानपहानेव पररूपसहक्षताम्
प्रतिबिम्बतामाहु : खड्गादर्शतलादिवत्।। T.A.III.54.

37. शक्तयोऽस्य जगत्कृत्स्नं, शक्तिमान् तु महेश्वर :। T.A.III, (*Bhasya*)

38. स्वरा एव सर्ववर्णानां मूलकारणम्।। T.A.III. 183. (*Bhasya*)

39. भूयोभूय : समावेश निर्विकल्पमिमं श्रित :।
अभ्येति भैरवीभावं जीवन्मुक्तिपराभिधम्।। T.A.III.271.

40. ....ऽस्मिन्स्वभावे पारमेश्वरे।
प्रविविक्षुर्विकल्पस्य कुयत्सिंसकारमञ्जसा।। T.A. IV.2.

41. उच्यते स्वात्मसंवित्ति : स्वभावादेव निर्भरा।
नास्यामपास्यं नाधेयं किञ्चिदित्युदितं पुरा।। T.A.IV.9.

42. स्वात्मप्रच्छादनक्रीड़ापण्ड़ित : परमेश्वर :।। T.A.IV.10.

43. शास्त्रान्तरे इति–अथदिसत्पथे वैष्णवाद्ये सत्पथं
शैवगुरुशास्त्रलक्षणम्, असद्गुवद्याश्रयानन्तरं
सद्गुवद्याश्रिते।। T.A.IV.36. (*Bhasya*)

44. किरणाख्यायां संहितायां मायाधर्मै : शून्यं परं तत्त्वं
ज्ञातुम्–'शून्यमेवं विधं ज्ञेयं गुरुत :, शास्त्रत :, स्वत' :। T.A.IV.41. (*Bhasya*)

45. यस्य स्वतोऽयं सत्तर्कः सर्वत्रैवाधिकारवान्।
अभिषिक्त : स्वसंवित्तिदेवीभिदीक्षितश्च स :।। T.A.IV.42. (*Bhasya*)

46. अकल्पितो गुरुर्ज्ञेय : सांसिद्धिक इति स्मृत :। T.A.IV.51.

47. शास्त्रवित्स गुरु : शास्त्रे प्रोक्तोऽकल्पितकल्पक :।। T.A.IV.52.

48. तस्य स्वेच्छप्रवृत्तत्वात् कारणान्तेष्यते।
कदाचित् भक्तियोगेन कर्मणा विद्ययापि वा।।
ज्ञानधर्मोपदेशेन मन्त्रैर्वा दीक्षयापि वा।
एवमाद्यैरनेकैश्च प्रकार : परमेश्वर :।
संसारिणोऽनुगृह्णाति विश्वस्य जगत : पति :। T.A.IV. 55-56.
(Vide *Bhasya* also)

49. यत् खलु स्वात्मलक्षणं सिसाधयिषितं परतत्त्वात्मकं
पूर्णं ज्ञानं तदेव नाम यत्र क्वापि दृश्यते स एव
अकल्पितकल्पको गुरुर्ज्ञेयो, न पुनर्भावनादिहेतुजालमात्र निष्ठ :। T.A.IV,
Bhasya-59

50. अन्यत् शास्त्रान्तरोक्तं लक्षणमपहाय तत्त्वज्ञानमेव मुख्यं लक्षणं श्रीब्रह्मयामले गुरोरुक्तम्। अन्यत्रोक्तम्–सर्वलक्षणहीनाऽपि ज्ञानवानगुरुत्तम। T.A.IV.59, *(Bhasya)*

51. संशयानो न सिद्धयति। T.A.IV 60-61 (*Bhasya*)

52. "आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्" इत्येवमात्म–आत्मसंबन्धि सं सम्यक् संशयविपयसि–रहितं "आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्" इत्येवम् आत्म यद्ज्ञानं। T.A.IV, *Bhasya* 60-61.

53. यत : शास्त्रक्रमात्तज्ज्ञगुरुप्रज्ञानुशीलनात्।
आत्मप्रत्ययितं ज्ञानं पूर्णत्वाद् भैरवायते। T.A. IV. 77, (*Bhasya*)

54. "त्रिप्रत्ययमिदं ज्ञानमात्मा शास्त्रं गुरोर्मुखम्"। T.A., IV.59 (*Bhasya*)

55. "तत्त्वे चेत : स्थिरं कार्यं। T.A.IV.108, (*Bhasya*)

56. एवं द्वैतपरामर्शनाशाय परमेश्वर :।। T.A.IV, 109
क्वचित् स्वभावममलमामृशन्ननिशं स्थित :।

57. तस्य देवातिदेवस्य परबोधस्वरूपिण :।
विमर्श : परमाशक्ति : सर्वज्ञज्ञानशालिनी ।। T.A.IV, 172. (*Bhasya*)

58. तन्मयीभवनं नाम प्राप्ति : सानुत्तरात्मनि।
पूर्णत्वस्य पराकाष्ठा संत्यज न फलान्तरम्।। T.A.IV.209.

59. सर्वनिर्विकल्पेन योगिना भाव्यम्। T.A.IV.231. *Bhasya.*

60. संवित्तादात्म्यमापन्नं सर्वं शुद्धमत : स्थितम्।। T.A.IV. 241.

61. परतत्त्वं प्रविविक्षुणा योगिना तत्र तावच्चेता : स्थिरीकार्यम्
इति नास्ति विमति :। T.A.IV.273. *(Bhasya)*

62. स ह्यखरिड़तसद्भावं शिवतत्त्वं प्रपश्यति।
यो ह्यखरिड़तसद्भावमात्मतत्त्वं प्रपद्यते।। T.a.III.275.

63. केतकीकुसुम सौरभे भृशं भृड़्ग एव रसिको न मक्षिका।
भैरवीयपरमाद्वयार्चने कोऽपि रज्यति महेशचोदित :।। T.A.IV.296.

RADHA SWAYAMVARA THEME IN *KESHAV PRAKASH* : An Introduction

—*Dr.V. N. Drabu*

[Brought out in 1993 (transliterated into Devnagri), *Keshav Prakash* is available from Utpal Publications, 206 Khanaja Complex, Main Market, Shakarpur, New Delhi-92. It bears an Introduction in English by A.N. Dhar, Keshav Joo Razdan's grandson.]

Kesava-Prakasa is a versified narrative of *Radha-Svayamvara* which Kesavjoo Razdan (Ca 1872-1920) took in hand in response to the wish of his only son Dina Nath. Eager to maintain and stabilize the path of *dharma* and to uphold the family tradition, Kesava invokes the benign grace of the Bestower of *Siddhis* (Siddhidayaka) Ganesa to fulfil the divine wish and to sustain his own *dhyana-dharana* (absorption in meditation). Next he turns to his guru and seeks the grace of *acitananda* (Anandswarupa Paramatman) to have the task fulfilled.

We are introduced to Radha who enters into a state of absorption to meet her beloved who has just finished off the cruel Kamsasura and his band notorious for its misdeeds and oppression on Devaki. Significantly, Parvati's union with Siva was consummated in a similar manner after a long and arduous penance. Not un-naturally Krishna *(nispanda* like Siva) responds to Radha's wish (iccha) to unfold and enact the play of physical manifestation.

Krishna returns to Gokula from Mathura. His coming symbolizes the renaissance of the spirit and matter. In unison, the entire Gokula blossoms forth into lovely lotus flowers, in keeping with the spiritual heritage of the land. It is a spring festival with melodies from *saza* and *santoor* filling the void and the gopis performing their divine *lila.* Devas join in their praises to Krishna, incarnate Visnu ; field-strip edges turn into lush green patches and the gardens are overlaid with ripe juicy fruit ; the waters of the Yamuna get purified and households resound with *manglacara* of Krishna ; the entrance to Gokula is turned into the gateway of the Gandharvas. The terror of Kamsa is gone. It is a most lovely dawn.

The sweet notes of *Poshnool* (golden oriole), *tota* (parrots), *hari* (myna), fill the air. There is a movement of some kind and that movement is part of the immense silence at the hour. The withered trees are sprouting new leaves and the fruit-bearing trees yielding wonderful fruit. There is nothing to distrub the harmony of the outer space and the planet earth. It is a communion where nature and mother-earth throb alike in perfect rhythm. How faithfully the spiritual quest and the running theme of the sages and *risis* is answered as the divine drama of the spirit unfolds itself on the earth! The trees, the birds, the spreading foilage of the pine tree are not separate, they are part of that quietude, within and without. It is a beautiful thing to watch, so alive and rich.

Narada Muni enters the *dvara* (gate) of Nandagopa who accepts the *Puja* (adoration) of all the *munis* and listens with rapt attention to the proposed marriage of Krishna. Yashodha and Nandagopa want the message to be reciprocated to Brkhabana in time, whereupon Narada speeds off to the latter, rejoicing at the proposal and the date fixed for the marriage ceremony (lagna). It is a moment of joy and fulfilment for Nandagopa and for all. Narada sends invitation in person to all *devas* from *Indralok* to *Sivaloka*. Nandgopa is now all set to prepare for the coming nuptial ceremony, inviting relatives and princes. He next prepares to contact Devaki to exchange their thoughts centred on the happy wedlock of Krishna-Radha, wishing the happy union to last for ever. The celestial clothes are stored for the auspicious occasion—*Zarbafat* and *Makhmal*, ornaments of precious stones. The fairies and *devakanyas* grace the occasion to the accompaniment of musical instruments to start their *vanavun* and *manglacara* (marriage songs and chanting of benedictory hymns). All objects around are filled with ambrosia ; Hara-mukha too is stirred with the note of *mangala*. The entire cosmos wears a festive look as if it were the vernal equinox, so fresh and soothing to the eye. What a happy concordance between the divine and the mundane! The hills across the lake are very beautiful and the clear blue sky quite serene. Everything is alive and joyous. The flowers are intense in their yellow, red and deep purple. Through all the movements of humans and nature there is enchanting beauty and an unearthly, all-pervading harmony.

In a typical Kashmiri setting, the smiling damsels or fairies (atsha-ratcha) with divine *mehandi* on their hands, enter the *dvara* of Nandagopa. A similar spectacle of *mehandirat* (the night of *mehandi*) in Vrkhabana-Sampata's house is reflected as if in a mirror. The graceful fairies, adorned with their dangling serpentine head-gear (pootch), carry garlands of flowers and the musk-deer aroma covers every nook and corner of the earth, and even the dark recesses of hearts and minds. There is an astonishing beauty pervading Gokula. The divine mothers, Purna, Mangala, Jaya-Vijaya, Krishna-Pingala, Visnu-Maya, Durga, Sarika, Rajna, follow suit. There come Ananda, Madhumati, Vaikhuri, Bhagavati, Kamala, Tripura, Saraswati, Sambhavi, and Ivala. Kesava would not miss to add the local colour to underscore the role of divine energy (Sakti) at such a propitious moment of Radha-Krishna *Swayamvara*. In tune and consonance with spiritual kingship and matrimony (to which this *Swayamvara* lends itself), the sacred rivers of Yamuna, Gaya, Vitasta, Ganga, Amaravati, Candrabhaga, Godavari, Bargasakha join hands to enter Nanda-Gopa's *dvara* with the life-giving and energizing streams of water carried in *Kalasas* of gold for the *Devaguna* (purification-bath ritual). Krishna is to have a holy bath with the waters of these sacred rivers and Radha's body too is to have a similar treat. She would next be clothed in silken raiments and the limbs of both will be smeared with celestial *mehandi*. The tender and sprightly damsels join in chorus to pray for the longevity of the pair and wish the Almighty (Daya) to cast the protective shade of *Rajahansa* (King-swan) (*travenak Daya-raja hainsun saye*) on them. Similar expressions are used for Sampta, Yashodha and Devaki. May they be blessed with sweet intelligence (*mitha boddha*) and live a long span of life ; may the divine mother (mauj) impart lustre to the subjects as well (which makes a total participation of the elements and the mortals a must). The sweet and steady-flowing notes of *Gau-loka*, tuned to *sarangi* and *dhola*, enrich the melody of the divine music and the *vanavun* (singing) of lovely maidens. It is a harmonious blend of notes issuing from the divine and the dainty damsels, congruous in all respects. Nothing is discordant in the whole scheme ; nothing divides the sacred from the profane. The unifying force of the Light of Consciousness welds all the seemingly disparate elements together into a divine *lila* where one observes *dwanda* (opposites/incongruities) revealed in a charming

motley fabric, which, sometimes, through ignorance, looks repugnant, monstrous and meaningless.

Following the *kanisrana* (ritual bath before *Devgun*) the Brahmana priest sets forth from the house of Vrkhabana to communicate the message and scroll of *lagna* (lagna-ceri) to Nandagopa. He felicitates them. Krishna's sister Subhadra comes forth to receive the messenger with a potful of coins (*aalat*). Having been seated with respect and love, the Brahmana communicates the most propitious time for *lagna* (zodiacal sign) for the marriage ceremony entreating them to come along with thousands of guests, Brahmanas and *pandits*, accompanied by thousands of elephants, horses and palanquins. The Brahmana receives a Iargesse of pearls and precious stones together with the cow and the horse, the emblems of royalty. Vrkhabana awakes to the reality of his daughter's luck turning ascendant following the return-note and consent of Kesava-Narayana through the Brahmana. A conjunction of happy stars!

Getting absorbed in Krishna-Radha *Samavesa* (union of Krishna-Radha), the listener is reminded of the fruit of listening to the *Radha-swayamvara* or *Hari-Syama Kalyan* that dispels the darkness of ignorance and kindles the Awakening Light of the Sun. The guests are streaming forth in their brilliant and scented costumes ; kings and princes come riding their bedecked elephants: the Gandharvas play the tunes of *Samaveda* ; the musical instruments of *dhola, dabar* and *santoor* heighten the intensity of the sweet notes. Indra is followed by a retinue of kings and princes; the air is fragrant with incense-burners of camphor and *kanthagana* (fragrant herbs) and sandalwood sticks ; the horses and elephants are caparisoned with gold-embroidered cloth. As the *devas* (gods) congregate, the fly-whisks move around Krishna, the faires dance with rhythmic movements, singing *Hurivacana* or marriage-songs. Ganesa is playing on the *Pancajanya* conch ; Narada is reciting *Hari--lila*. The central figure Krishna is decorated with a fitting crown, wearing pearl-studded necklaces, gold bracelets and gold ear-rings. Clad in gold-embroidered costumes, *Pitambar* (yellow attire) is wound around his neck and *Kaustubha* shines on his chest. He puts on the *Vaijayanti Mala* and *vana-mala* (special garlands of flowers), holding a lotus in one of his hands. His crown, adorned

with numerous jewels and pearls, shines brilliant like thousands of suns. The whole place looks a lotus-bed turned into a virtual heaven. Uttering *Hari Om*, the Bridegroom is stationed on the lotus bedecked *vyuga* (mandala, the multi-coloured circle of cosmos). It is a moment of jubilation for *bhaktas* and *siddhas*. Devaki and Yashoda kiss him again and again and offer him sugar-crystals ('nabad'). The journey starts by slow steps towards Vrkhabana's, some riding their horses, others their elephants and yet others driven in chariots. All the roads are besprinkled with *rose-essence*. The parasol-bearers carry the *chhatra* (umbrella) of Sesanaga with Narada Muni playing the *raga* of *Hari*. Jaya-Vijaya are other staff-bearers (*'chher-i-bardars'*) paying their homage to Krishna all the way. Rudra, Brahma, Vishnu, Iswara, Sadasiva come riding on their mounts and Kumara, the commander of the divine forces, marches forth on his peacock, in full armour and clad in robes of golden silk. To the accompaniment of musical notes, *devas* and *rajas* keep to their respective paths, with well-attired Vrshbha (Nandi) and Kamadenu (celestial cows) marching with the gait of swift-moving *kuntala* horses. Sanaka and Janakadi are waving their fly-whisks and chanting vedic hymns and songs celestial. The Saptarsis (Seven Sages) are carrying the water of the seven rivers (sapta-jala) and sprinkle Krishna with *attar* (scent), camphor, sandalwood, musk etc. Haladhara, Rama, Balaji, dressed in golden robes, are full of joy and the *devas* are offering worship to Krishna (the incarnation of Visnu). The path leading to Vrkhaban's is decorated with velvet and flowers ; and palanquins moving along with guests present an astonishing sight. Indraja (the lord of devas) carries the papier-machie decoration box (*sanjavora*), the Sumeru *parvata* (moutain) the ornaments and the ocean *samudra*, the choicest pearls and jewels befitting the occasion. As the party moves, *Hurinayas* (singing damsels) are seen flocking to windows to have a first glimpse of the bridegroom. Flower-petals are showered on Krishna. It is a feast of colour, a spectacle of beauty and melody all around. As chanting and music continues, we see faces are transformed and become radiant, ageless, and they create, with the sound of the words and the powerful intonation, extraordinary atmosphere of a very ancient lore. The sound of the words has great depth, that of a human voice alive to the significance of words made holy by time and usage. The sound of the chant penetrates the mind and the heart. You feel

your body being uncontrollably shaken by the sound of the words. It holds you in its movements ; it is living, dancing, vibrant and mind-abosrbing. Krishna, in all his majesty ('Aishwarya') is depicted as a full-fledged sovereign, celebrating the occasion together with *devas* and *manavas*.

In their *Mangalacara* (benedictory hymns), the ladies describe the *Sabha* (the prototype of the Vedic Samiti and Sabha) to which have come the celestial beings, saints and *siddhas,* and which is being supervised by Indraja. Mother Annapurna distributes the dainty dishes, *Mahavidya* the *rasa*, *Rajna* the sweetened rice-milk. Sila, Sita, Vijaya, Pingala, Mangala are in attendance, holding flywhisks in their hands. *Lokapalas* stand as guardians of the quarters ; Saraswati and Sampata are reciting the songs celestial. The retinue of gods is seen moving along, each carrying his *ayudhas,* appropriate weapons or objects in his hands. Varuna is holding the holy water of the Ganges; the seven swans in his chariot are the seven seas. The four-faced Brahma recites the four Vedas. Laksmi-Narayana, draped in *Pitambar* upto the ground holds all the four *ayudhas* of *Gada* (mace), *padma*, (lotus) *cakra* (discus) and *Pancajanya* (conch), representing the moon, the earth, the sun, the sky respectively. They feel gratified to see Rudra-Isvara and the six-faced Kumara. This *Sabha* is served food and *gangajala* by Purna and Sarika. It is an extraordinarily happy meet.

The *dvara-puja* that now starts soon after Radha-Krishna's reception on the *vyuga* (the cosmic mandala) and Sampata's offering of *nabad* (sugar candy) to the couple and the illumination of seven jewelled lamps (*sapta-ratna deepa*) in their honour is the next important step in the marriage ceremony. With Yoga-maya's *jaya-jaya* notes of victory accompanied by *vanavun* (singing), all eyes are focussed on Vrkhaban-Indraja come to perform the *dvara-puja*. The *manglacara* chorus is repeated as Bhagya-Sri Bhagavaan, accompanied by Asta-Siddhi mothers, moves to the *dvara* of Vrkhaban's. "Plant your feet on the sandal-wood *dvara* to allow the Indraja Vrkhabana to offer his *puja* to you" says the *Yajamani* to Krishna. "Father Sumer, the golden mountain will be your anchor in the *lagna-mandala* to which you are to repair shortly, with *astasiddhis* (symbolizing eight spiritual powers) in attendance to have the full *puja* performed". Brahma and the *Karanas* have come

to join the flower-offering ceremony (*posh-puja*). "Radha", says Sampata (Goddess Lakshmi), the *Yajamani* of the *swayamvara*, "your inscribed name would be the stone set in the emerald-ring of Krishna. Your *dhyana* would result in *sukha* (happiness) and remove sins and annihilate the *danavas*". Tripura, Brahmavidya, Siddhalaksmi, Gayatri, Savitri, Mangaleshvari have come with their largesse. The *rindas* (unfettered mystics) of Ayodhya, Delhi, Lahore have joined the *Svaymvara* together with the rulers of Kashi, Kashmir and Nepal. *Sesanaga* has come with *tapadana* and the jewels shine forth. Besides a cavalcade of elephants, palanquins, chariots, horses there are to be seen the golden-coloured screened boats (*ranganava*), the colourful boats with a *mandala* in the middle (*cakavare*), decorated house-boats (doongas). Musicians and dancers join the symphony. The treasurer Kubera, the ten Daksapalas, *Vetala Bhairava* move along the path strewn with precious jewels. All eyes are on Krishna who is the pupil of our eyes, the lustre of his friends and the *Mahakala* (death) of his foes. Sampata, the *yajamani*, watches the scene close by. As the sacred syllables of *bhu, bhuvah, swah* are distinctly heard, Krishna and Vrkhabana exchange *japhala*. While ascending the place of *lagna* is heard *suham*.The *yajamana* Indraja Vrkhabana commences the *lagna* ceremony and offers *ahutis* (oblations) to the sacrificial god *Agnidevata* (god of fire) in person. To the left of Krishna is seated Radha who, like the moon in *samadhi*, faces the sun. As the god Agni accepts the oblations, *devas, rsis, Brahmanas* are busy chanting the *lagna-mantras* and Vedic *rcas*. Fly-whisks move vigorously, the incense from musk-deer, sandal, camphor, ghee add to the scented and sweetened atmosphere of joy and fulfilment, the musical notes rising to their feverish pitch. As the sacred *mantras* of *abhiseka* are recited, Radha through her *samkalpa* (mental desire) enters another *gotra*. The wedded are shown the *astadarsana,* each other's reflection. *Vitasta* comes as *gangavesa* (Ganga as the friend of Radha), carrying *samvit amrta* that she sprinkles on the couple that has been already made to join hands in *padmasana* by Garga and Vyasa. She stands to get her *upahara* (present) from the Bridegroom.

Placing their feet on the blue stone of steadfastness in love (*nilavatha*), Pandits chant vedic *mantras*. Radha is made to step over the seven gold coins (*mohars*) and is introduced into the *gotra*

of Sri Krishna. Nanda now exchanges walnuts with Vrkhabana, Sampata enters from another door and ties the mangala garland to Krishna's lustrous be-jewelled *mukuta*. Having offered (money) *daksina* to gurus, *manana mala* is tied to Krishna's *mukuta*. As the Yajamani Sampata offers *nabad* to Sri Krishna, she beholds, with great excitement, Parambrahma with Sakti in his opened mouth (the most cherished refrain of the Saivas in Kashmir). Flower petals are showered on Krishna by *devas, rsis* and devotees.

Union itself is timeless; it is not a way of arriving at a timeless state. It is without a beginning and without an ending. Sri Krishna's eating of *nabad* and exhibiting his *viswarupa* (Cosmic manifestation) *darsana* through his mouth is just the culmination of one's *brahmajnana* (the knowledge of self) born of penance and righteousness. Vrkhabana sees the *Brahmakarama* and the dazzling *suryas* of *atma* all round. All this is the result of Sakti-pata. The realization dawns on them to perceive that Radha is born through sheer Maya to be united with Sri Krishna. Vrkhaban's ignorance is gone ; he sees the reality of *rtam* (*dharma-niti*/divine truth), *satyam* (truth), *purusam* (body of the five elements) *param-brahma* (the Absolute/Attributeless Brahma), *Sakti* transformed into Mother, the Cosmic energy He sees the same Krishna-pingala as *ardha-linga*, the *Mahabahu* in its manifestation of colour and form. He sees in Him the ether with the earth lovingly looking at it and the moon looking at the sun. He sees the fourteen lakh *yonis* stayed in Him. The manifested one is perceived by the unmanifested. He sees the single colour transformed into myriad colours, he sees in Him the *satta* existence of the eighty-four-lakhs of *jivas* ; he sees in Him *rca* the brilliance of thousands of suns, the *brahma-rupa sakti* and *sakti-rupa brahman*, rolled in one, *Param-sakti* circumambulating the *paramatma*. He is *vataphul*, symbolozing the wandering behaviour of *jiva's* mind. All the myriad colours are converted into a single spotless *tejas* and that alone is left finally. It is this that shines in all. He is beautiful within and without. The *sadhakas* see Him through their *nirmala bhava* (unconditioned mind). He is not bound in the net of proofs ; He is the subtlest of the subtle and the sublimest of the sublime in the liying, and the non-living (*caracara*) He is the *moniphul* (pupil) of the eyes, called *Anamaya* (beyond disease and bodily afflictions), He is beyond the comprehension of the self-fulfilled ones. He alone can describe Him who has the *sakti* of *apanga* the 'imperishable'. He

is far from any certainty. Of course, the very desire to be certain, to be secure is the beginning of bondage. It is a hindrance. He may be seen in his expansion (*vikasa*) at Haramukha ; He may be seen without the dichotony *(dwanda)* of dualism and ignorance. He is to be seen as the very symbol of manifestation and absorption, as the conjunction of *karma* and *anugraha karana*. He is to be seen in the fire, in the sun, in the life breath (*prana*) in the *caracara* (the animate and the inanimate). He is to be seen as *Nila-Rudra*, as the pearl bedecked snow. All the *karnas* issue from Him and merge into Him. He is unborn, ageless, immortal, one without a second. He is Ananda, *Alavya* and *Abhaya*, formless and colourless, the very axis of the Cosmos. He is Samari (divine darkness) from which springs the divine *Jyoti ranga* lustre.

Kesava longs for serving at the feet of the Lord. To one who has not seen Him, Kesava's discovery of the Divine would be meaningless as if to a fool. But has'nt he found it for himself ? Total action lies in realizing the self, and that total action is love symbolically represented by Kesava's *Radha-Swayamvara*. Sampata's joy and love lyrics and the *lilas* of Saraswati and Uma are as touching as the scene of the food of the bride and bridegroom (*daya-bata*) served to Narayana-Laksmi, which conveys to the reader the tenor and essence of a Kashmiri marriage, synchronizing the union of the divine with the human, the throb of the the *satta* (life-essence) that moves and works in us all. Like the *gopis* he is intoxicated with the love of the lord, feeling the pangs of separation unbearable. He exhorts Him to take pity on his shelterless state and to repeat for him his *rasa-mandala* lest he should be left forlorn and sad. True to the spirit of the land, he exhorts his name-sake Kesava, Sri Krishna (Lala's 'Siva Va Kesava') to endow him with the energy of *Vicaragni (Vimarsa)* that would burn the woods of all passions to see the light of *Suprakasa* and to shelter him under His lotus-feet. The wish is repeated to accomplish the fulfilment of *Dwadasanta mandala*. Kesava (the author of *Kesava Prakash*) is ready for the divine grace with all his sixteen spiritual faculties/wares (*samana*) sharpened corresponding to the sixteen *kalas* (attributes) of the Lord. There is no waiting. There is an endless movement in which life and death are the same for Kesava. He lives without conflict ; he lives with beauty and love; he is not frightened of death beacuse to love is to die.

BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI AS JAGADGURU

—Philip Simpfendorfer

Esteemed friends, I am greatly honoured to have the opportunity to share a few thoughts on Bhagavaan Gopinathji and the spiritual heritage he represents. It is his present and future role which interests me most. What is immortal does not die. Great poets live on in their poetry, sages in their wisdom and great saints in their ever-living presence. There is no doubt that Bhagavaanji's divine essence dominated both his physical and ghostly existence. Hence his meeting with me ten years after he died, was nothing unusual. Some of the comments at that time I am just beginning to understand. However, for the past twenty years I have sought to carry out some of the statements he made. It may seem a rash thing to say that his presence can be felt in the hushland property where I live in Australia but other people have commented on his presence, even though there is no teaching or worship. He lives on now as a *Jagadguru*, yet he carries the spirit of Kashmir.

Before I begin to express my views on certain matters, it may be made clear that I am not an authority on anything. I am just one of the masses, an ordinary person, accepting my democratic right to have an opinion.

From reading, I suspect that Kashmir's greatest contribution to the world was around the 7th Century A. D. It would seem that at that time Kashmir was literally a paradise whose influence spread far beyond the Valley, helped by the conquests of Pravarasena the second. I suspect that the esssence of this cultural surge remained into this century in Bali, Indonesia, described by Nehru as "the morning of the world". The main feature of this culture seems to be that *heaven is objectified in the environment*. The loveliness of the people, justice of government, treating the land as sacred, continuing blessing to earth and heaven emanating from temples, recognising natural features as gods and goddesses, glorifying harmonious form in architecture and art, saints devoting their lives to prayer and meditation—all such qualities create heaven on earth. No wonder Pravarasena was able to fly off to heaven without dying ! Heaven and earth were one. Even at a later period Kalhana

was able to write that good things difficult to find in heaven are common in Kashmir.

Most respected friends, you are heirs to this heritage. Over many centuries of oppression you have remained true to this heritage, for surely you know that God shines forth out from the perfection of beauty. Kashmir is Parvati, the perfection of beauty. As quoted in P. N. K. Bamzai's *History of Kashmir,* it was Lord Krishna who said so. To some degree this divine beauty is expressed through all of you. My experience is that it emanated from Bhagavaanji.

It is impossible to be born and grow up in an environment without being permeated by it. Now that you are exiled from your land, there is a great sadness. Will your children, nurtured away from the sacred Valley still carry its quality ? Will that most noble heritage become only a memory ? Yet exile can mean not just an ending, but a new beginning. Tibetan Buddhists are an example—having been driven from their homeland they purified and simplified their message so that now Buddhist monasteries and centres dot the whole Western world. Can the Kashmir heritage be carried in a similar way ?

Nehru commented in his introduction to Bamzai's History of Kashmir, that "a special characteristic of the Kashmiris has always been a love of nature". For the non-Kashmiri how is this love to be understood ? In the life of Swami Vivekananda we are told that when Vivekananda entered Kashmir his "mind was filled with the legends with which the Kashmiris have peopled the Cathedral rocks, the many ruins and winding passes". The legends were just the outer garments for the truth as expressed in the *Nilamata Purana* the river mentioned is Goddess Uma, the three mountains Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, in fact, in the first 25 verses of the *Purana* we are told twice that all the sacred places of earth are in Kashmir. As understood in the West it is not just a love of nature but a love of divinised nature. To me, Kashmir is the Holy Land of the Goddess. It is the hub of the world. It is Earth's divine centre.

Because of your exile, I feel that I too am exiled from Kashmir. But I am not exiled from Bhagavaanji. Kashmir is the

hub of the whole world, but it is a place. Bhagavaan is a whole world teacher. To me, the genuineness of a realised *Jagadguru* lies in his ability to be anywhere in the world and to expand the consciousness of persons in any religious tradition. In Hindu terms, Gopinath is a Bhagavaan . In more secular Western terms he is a guide of humanity. It shoud be possible for the Kashmir heritage and Bhagavaanji to be appreciated in terms of any religion. Let me try briefly with Christianity.

In Christian scripture (*Romans* Chapter 1) St. Paul wrote that the basic global manifestation of the Divine Presence was in nature. "God's eternal power and deity can be clearly seen in His creation." Could this not have been an expression of 8th Century Kashmir ? "God's eternal power and deity can be clearly seen in Kashmir". Divine embodiment in human form is the essence of Christianity. Does not the term "Bhagavaan" imply this ? The miracles of Bhagavaanji and Jesus were similar. Bhagavaanji was called Shah-en Shah, Jesus, King of Kings. Both remained active after death. The list could go on.

On course, Bhagavaanji is a Hindu. What I am trying to say is that a Buddhist, Moslem, Shinto or Taoist could meet Bhagavaanji as a saint in their own religion. I spoke of Christianity because I have only a superficial awarness of these other religions. When Bhagavaanji spoke to me in 1978 he said that "they"—he spoke in the plural—did not interfere in any one's religion. Speaking personally, Jesus Christ is still my Lord and Saviour, Bhagavaanji my contemporary guide. I would never suggest to any one of my Buddhist friends that they should change their allegiance from Buddha. At a deep level, I am a cell in the body of Christ moving to resurrection, my friends are cells in the body of Buddha leading to enlightenment. I experience Bhagavaanji as a creator of the dawning age. He can be a guide to anyone who seeks divine union on a divinised earth provided Bhagavaanji agrees. The choice is his.

If Bhagawanji can be appreciated in any religion, how much more can the spirit of Kashmir which he carries, be appreciated in any part of the world ! To make sacred the surrounding landscape is surely a part of the desires of the human soul. Even though we may not have the realisation to see everything

as God, we can, at least, see landscape in terms of our concepts of the divine presence. This is to recognise the innate divinity of nature.

The 7th Century cannot be re-created. Much has changed. However, even if the forms of that period cannot be restored, its essence can grow up to be clothed in new forms. I believe that it was Bhagavaanji who called me to seek to see a paradise arise in the ancient, rugged property where I live. Although it functions in the Australian cultural context, it is named "Glastonbell" in recognition of the Celtic spirituality which underlies Western culture. Hopefully, it will help in a small way to form new patterns for the dawning great month of Aquarius.

At present the world is unlike paradise. In fact, it is more like the opposite. Perhaps the focus for us all should be to work for the creation of a network of paradises across the globe. Imagine how wonderful it would be to go anywhere on Earth and find the essence of Kashmiri spirituality ! Perhaps the age of constructed *ashrams,* temples and churches is past. Let there be paradises instead. There is room in paradise for any number of *ashrams*, temples and churches.

In the Western world, some advanced thinkers say, "We must begin to see nature in a new way". I think they mean that we have to stop seeing the natural world as something to be mastered and exploited and chewed up to satisfy rampant consumerism. Hence, Western culture tends to be a spiritual garbage dump. From where I sit at the typewriter I can see a book entitled, "Himalaya—encounters with eternity". That is how the whole realm of creation should be seen—as the manifestation of eternity. Seeing the whole world in this way is a bit hard but we can start with our little paradises.

Will you be tolerant enough for me to let me tell the story, very briefly, of Bhagavaanji in Australia. I met Bhagavaanji in 1978. The following year I organised Bhagavaanji's birthday Celebration which was a weekened camp in the forest for two dozen people. The flow of Bhagavaan consciousness had begun, and Shri S. N. Fotedar said that Bhagavaanji was in Australia. The next connection was with the energy of the land itself and the aboriginal

presence in the landscape. Sri Fotedar said that the sweet fragrance of Bhagavaanji was no longer apparent. This movement was called "Renewing of the Dreaming" and over 30 camps were held over two years. Growth had been too rapid and I no longer represented what the majority wanted. Bhagavaanji seemed to direct the responsible founding members of "Renewing of the Dreaming" to leave and make a new start on land that we purchased. Looking back, it has been like a cosmic battle to establish "Glastonbell" as a potential paradise. It has taken 14 years to establish a beach-head of sacred land. Although there are 1000 visitors each year, there is still no strong residential community. The next step in unfolding paradise is to build a house of cosmic proportions (an anchorage called House of Sophia) where a few hermits might live and from whom would emanate blessing to earth, sky, infinity and all their creatures. With the intention of purchasing Glastonbell and managing it as a Trust, a group of friends have formed a legal entity with fund raising rights called Hagia Gaia Incorporated. Hagia Gaia is Greek for Sacred Earth, Gaia being the name of the Ancient Greek Earth Goddess. The charter of Hagia Gaia Inc. is much wider than the purchase of Glastonbell. Its perspective is global. Perhaps through it the sweet fragrance of Bhagavaanji will be released again.

People from most parts of the world have visited Glastonbell, but there has not been a Kashmiri. When will that time come ? Hopefully, Hagia Gaia will one day be able to work on a common project with the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust or some other group which seeks to see the glory of sacred Kashmir shining throughout the world.

As I have not seen a map of sacred Kashmir, it is possible that none exists. If not, I believe it should be a priority to make one and distribute it to every Kashmiri family in exile to hang near their picture of Bhagavaanji. It should highlight the sacred places and say what they are. In other words, not just "Hari Parbat" but also words like : "the hill of the Universal Mother, containing the presence of all gods and goddesses". Then at regular times, have discussions with the children of the household concerning sacred Kashmir. By ceremonies, prayers and visualisations, keep alive the faith that you and your descendents will live in a valley which is again the perfection of beauty. And encourage young people to be

single-minded in their intentions and activities to spread the essence throughout the world. Let them be paradise-builders. Let them become people who burn with the passion to see heaven on earth—or more precisely, earth in heaven.

May you all be blessed and empowered to live in the heart of Sacred Kashmir. May she live in your hearts so that your lives forever express her heavenly grace. It was a most wonderful blessing to be born in the hub of the world. It is a grevious loss to be in exile from her. Perhaps your role is to make her loveliness flow to the rest of the world so that the whole earth is bathed in the spiritual essence of Kashmir.

पण्डित कृष्ण जू राज़दान

—प्रो॰ भूषणलाल कौल

कश्मीरी साहित्य के इतिहास में सगुण भक्ति काव्य के अंतर्गत स्वामी परमानन्द (१७६१ ई॰ से १८७६ई॰) के पश्चात् कृष्ण जू राज़दान (१८५० ई॰ से १९२६ई॰) का योगदान अभूतपूर्व रहा है। उन्नीसवीं शताब्दी के आठवें दशक से लेकर बीसवीं शताब्दी के तीसरे दशक तक माधुर्यमय कृष्ण के अनेक छविचित्र उन की कृष्ण लीलाओं का शृंगार करते रहे। पण्डित जी मूलतः शिवभक्त थे। शिव और शक्ति के अनन्य उपासक। लेकिन साधना के पथ पर वे एक महान समन्वयकारी सिद्ध हुए। यही कारण है कि शिव में ही उन्हें केशव का स्वरूप दिखाई देने लगा फलतः शिव और केशव की स्तुतिवन्दना उन्होंने एक साथ की। भक्ति और लीला काव्य के क्षेत्र में यह मणि कांचन का योग अपने आप में अद्‌भुत है :—

'शिवुई छु केशव केशव छु शिवुई
थनि आऽस अदऽ प्योस ग्यवुई नाव'[1]।

अथवा

'हरस' सांपुन 'हरी' केशव बन्योव शिव
अद्वैत रूप नारायण प्रकट गव'[2]।

पण्डित कृष्ण जू राज़दान की समस्त रचनाओं का विभाजन मुख्यतः दो प्रकार से किया जा सकता है :—

1. वर्णनात्मक कथाकाव्य
2. स्फुट भक्तिपरक लीलाकाव्य

वर्णनात्मक कथा काव्य के क्षेत्र में उन की उल्लेखनीय रचना है—'शिव परिणय'। यह रचना रॉयल ऐशियाटिक सोसाईटी (बंगाल) ने सन् १९१३ से सन् १९२४ तक धारावाहिक रूप से छः भागों में देवनागरी लिपि में प्रकाशित की। इस के सम्पादक थे सर जार्ज अब्राहम ग्रियर्सन। इस की मूल कथा का केन्द्र बिन्दु है— शिव और शक्ति का विवाह और अभिव्यक्ति की मुख्य शैली है लीला। स्फुट भक्ति परक लीला काव्य के अंतर्गत मनमोहन के अद्‌भुत सौन्दर्य चित्रों से वे भक्तजनों को आह्लादित कर देते हैं। पौराणिक घटना क्रम पर आधारित कृष्ण की बाल्यावस्था से राज्य प्राप्ति तक के असंख्य रूप चित्र हमें इन लीलाओं में

देखने को मिलते हैं। जसोदा और नन्द बाबा के प्राणप्रिय माखनचोर के नटखट बाल जीवन से सम्बन्धित नाना घटनाओं और विशिष्ट प्रसंगों को बड़ी तन्मयता के साथ चित्रित किया गया है। इन गीतों में लोक जीवन के अनेक सौन्दर्य बिम्ब साकार हो उठे हैं। नाद–सौन्दर्य की दृष्टि से भी इन रचनाओं का अपना विशेष महत्त्व है। संगीत के साथ भी पण्डित जी को लगाव था। वे स्वयं एक अच्छे गायक थे और प्रायः अपनी रचनाएँ स्वयं गा कर सुनाते थे। किसी भी कश्मीरी भक्त कवि में लोक संगीत के साथ इतना आकर्षण नहीं रहा है जितना पण्डित कृष्ण राज़दान को था। बहते झरनों के झर झर में, वेगवान पवन के साँय–साँय में, पक्षियों के कलरव में, पत्तों की सरसराहट में और नदियों की कल–कल ध्वनि में उन्हें कृष्ण बाँसुरी का नाद मिश्रित स्वर में सुनाई देता है। वस्तुतः सम्पूर्ण प्रकृति को कृष्णमय देखकर वे आत्म विभोर हो उठते हैं। वात्सल्य रस से ओत प्रोत उन की एक लीला में व्यग्र जसोदा की रूला देने वाली प्रतीक्षा देखते ही बनती है :–

'बाल कृष्णनस छस ब्व प्रारान छाल, मारान यीना
बंसरी छस कन ब्व दारान शब्द बूज़िथ मत् ना
जसोदा छस पत् लारान छ़ाल मारान यीना[3]।

मन के हिडौले में हुलारने की बलवती इच्छा भक्त कवि के मानस में आनन्द की स्रोतस्विनी प्रवाहित कर देती है। वह तो प्राणप्रिय की हर अदा (मोहकचेष्टा) पर सौ सौ बार बलिहारी हैः–

'बालक अवस्थायि लगयो लो लो
मन् मंज़ लिस मंज़ करय हो हो
वसुदेव निस निनसुई लगयो
गोकुल हयथ यिनसुई लगयो
जसोदायि दोद चनसुई लगयो
मन् मंज़लिस मंज़ कराय हो हो[4]।

मात्र मुरली की मधुर तान सुन कर भक्त जन अपना सर्वस्व निछावर करने के हेतु निकल पड़ते हैं। उस क्षण 'लोक लाज' शब्द भी अपनी अर्थवत्ता खो देता है। जसोदा कुछ–कुछ इस तथ्य से परिचित है कि 'जन्मा है जगत जिस से वही जन्मा हमारे घर'। यही बात तो वह अपने पति नन्द ग्वाल से अत्यन्त भोलेपन के साथ तब कह देती है जब गोकुल के हर गोशे में मुरली की मधुर तान गूँज उठती है :–

'मोरली शब्द असि गव कनन वनन छि राधा कृष्ण हय आव
जसोदा छयनन्द गूरिस वनन ज़गत यस ज़ाव सुई असिज़ाव
आऽस मुच़रोवस त् आश्च़र छ़ुाननन वनन छि राधा कृष्ण हय आव[5]।

गोपियों से सम्बन्धित कृष्ण प्रेम के दो महत्त्वपूर्ण आयाम हैं एक है इस का अलौकिक पक्ष और दूसरा लौकिक पक्ष। लौकिक पक्ष में जीवन जीने की धड़कनें साफ़ सुनाई देती हैं। यहाँ आकर्षण के डोर में बंध जाने की बलवती इच्छा है, दो से एक होने की लालसा है, प्राणप्रिय पर निछावर होने का दृढ़ संकल्प है, निष्ठुर पिया से बतियाने और आँखों आँखों में सब कुछ कहने, सुनने और समझने की तमन्ना है। ऐसी विकट स्थिति में साजन और सजनी के मध्य सखी का प्रसंग महत्त्वपूर्ण होने के साथ–साथ हिया की बात पिया तक पहुँचाने का साधन भी तो है :–

'आव हय नन्दलाल बिन्दराबन सूत्यि गूपियन गिन्दने
टाऽठ राधा छस क्रेशन तस छु आमुत वुछने
मथरायि त्रऽविथि रूक्मण सूत्यि गूपियन गिन्दने[6]।

'मै भरपूर आतिथ्य सत्कार करूँगी प्रिय। निमंत्रण है मेरा' बस और कहने की आवश्यकता नहीं क्योंकि साहस और धैर्य के बान्ध टूट रहे हैं, प्रतीक्षा के क्षण जान लेवा बन गये हैं, हृदय में शूल चुभ रहे हैं और आँखें लगभग पथरा गई हैं बाट जोहते। अतः केवल एक संकेत ही पर्याप्त है :–

'लाल् यित् साल् प्याल् हो बरयो
माल् करय माल् हो करयों'[7]।

गोकुलवास में राधा प्रसंग भी अत्यन्त महत्त्वपूर्ण है। गोकुल के समीप बरसाने गाँव के गोपराज वृषभान की कन्या राधा कृष्ण की चहेती है। बाल्यावस्था से ही एक दूसरे के सम्पर्क में आकर चंचल, चतुर और विनोद प्रिय राधा कृष्ण को अपने आकर्षण के डोर में बान्ध देती है। इस प्रसंग को यदि लौकिक दृष्टि से ही देखा जाये तो अत्यन्त आकर्षक प्रतीत होगा। राधा कृष्ण के असीम प्रेम में निमग्न है और कृष्णमय होने के लिये अत्यन्त आतुर। चितचोर पिया को 'नन्दग्वाल का अकनन्दुन' कह कर राज़दान साहब ने इसे एक सुदृढ़ लोकाधार प्रदान करने का प्रयास किया है। राधा सब कुछ दाँव पर लगा लेने के लिये आतुर है क्योंकि उस का हृदय परवश है। देखा जाये तो यह परवशता ब्रह्म के प्रति जीव की है, इष्ट के प्रति भक्त की है अथवा असीम के प्रति ससीम की है :–

'छस ब्व राधा कृष्णनावस कल् वन्दनुई
च्यथ म्य न्यूनम नन्द गोरिन अकनन्दनुई।
जसोदा नन्द आनन्द कन्द गोविन्दनुई मन न्यूनम
निर्द्वन्द्वनुई, न्यस्पन्दनुई, नादब्यन्दनुई मनान्यूनम[8]।

कृष्ण राज़दान ने अत्यन्त सुन्दर रास लीलाएँ भी लिखी हैं। इन लीलाओं में रासनृत्य का नाटकीय चित्रण वस्तुतः कृष्णमय होने की अवस्था का यथार्थ बोध है। रासभूमि पर रासमंडल की परिधि में रास–विलास में निमग्न रासबिहारी की मनमोहक छवि कवि को अधीर बना देती है। यहाँ अत्यन्त सहज भक्तिभाव से प्रेरित भक्त स्थिर चित्त होकर अपने आराध्य में लीन होने का प्रयास करता है। जहाँ परमानन्द की लीलाओं में गहन चिन्तन एवं गूढ़ विचारों की प्रधानता है वहाँ कृष्ण राज़दान की लीलाओं में एक निश्छल भक्त–हृदय की विशुद्ध प्रेमाभिव्यक्ति साकार हो उठी है। संगीत नृत्य और काव्य का अद्भुत संगम रास का मुख्य आकर्षण है। इस में प्रेम की उष्णता और लय होने की उत्तेजना एक साथ देखने को मिलती हैं। रास में लीन होकर अथवा खोकर बिन्दु अपने क्षुद्र अस्तित्व को सिन्धु में विलीन कर देता है। गोपीनाथ की नृत्य मग्न मुद्रा का एक आकर्षक दृश्य चित्र देखने योग्य है :–

'समिव करव अथवास, पकिवरास गिन्दाने।
शेर्यथ सांपिन कुनीराथ, गोपीनाथ नच़नि लोग
वहर दोह गव पहर मास, पकिव रास गिन्दाने'[9]।

राज़दान साहब ने हिन्दी बोली में भी कृष्ण लीलायें लिखी हैं। इन रचनाओं में साहित्यिक हिन्दी का सुलझा अथवा उलझा हुआ रूप देखने को नहीं मिलता लेकिन एक निर्मल कवि हृदय की सरस और सहज अभिव्यक्ति अवश्य मिलती है। मोहन के मनमोहक गुणों का उल्लेख करते हुए कवि वास्तव में अपने मानस के हर्षोल्लास को अभिव्यक्त कर रहे हैं। लयावस्था में लीला गान करते हुए अभिव्यक्ति जब पौराणिक सन्दर्भो के साथ जुड़ जाती है तो कलात्मक होने के साथ साथ वैचारिक स्तर पर भी सारगर्भित हो जाती है। 'बिन्द्राबन' (वृन्दावन) का वैकुंठ हो जाना तो इसी स्थिति का परिणाम है :–

'सबों को ले गया तनमन जो मोहन हो तो ऐसा हो
हुआ बैकुंठ बिन्द्राबन जो नन्दन हो तो ऐसा हो

वही निर्मल वही निर्गुण निरंजन हो तो ऐसा हो
ब्रह्मानन्द गण पूर्ण सुदर्शन हो तो ऐसा हो
जसोदानन्द का प्यारा कुँआरा हो तो ऐसा हो
लड़कपन में फिरा बन बन नज़ारा हो तो ऐसा हो'[10]।

पण्डित कृष्ण जू राज़दान को बालसखा कृष्ण ने विशेष रूप से मोह लिया था। यहाँ गिरिधारी अथवा तुंगीश की तुलना में घनश्याम का महत्त्व अधिक है। पुराणों में वर्णित कृष्ण जो आगे चलकर कृष्ण भक्ति का आलम्बन बन जाता है पण्डित जी की रचनाओं का मुख्याधार है। यहाँ भी ऐश्वर्यमय कृष्ण की तुलना में माधुर्यमय कृष्ण के प्रति कवि का विशिष्ट आकर्षण है। भक्तों के अनुरंजन के हेतु कृष्ण का लोकरजंक रूप ही नाना लीलाओं के माध्यम से साकार हो उठा है। इस में सन्देह नहीं कि श्रीमद्भागवत (भागवत पुराण) में वर्णित कृष्ण के बाल और किशोर जीवन से सम्बंधित कथा सूत्रों से वे प्रेरित रहे हैं। उन की रचनाओं का प्रमुखाधार है – ब्रजवासी लीला परायण कृष्ण। नन्द, यशोदा, गोप और गोपी के प्रिय कृष्ण अर्थात् रस किशोर कृष्ण ही उन्हें अभिव्यक्ति के हेतु अधीर कर देता है।

कृष्ण राज़दान के सगुण भक्ति काव्य की सब से बड़ी विशेषता है उन की सचाई और सादगी। वे एक जन्मजात कवि थे। उन का कवि, व्यक्तित्व उन के साधनारत साधक के व्यक्तित्व से कही अधिक सशक्त और आकर्षक है। वे लोक जीवन के प्रति सचेत थे। लोक–भाषा, लोक शैली, लोक वाद्य, लोकसंगीत एवं लोक नृत्य–सब से मिल कर उन के कृष्ण काव्य को लोक मानस के साथ जोड़ दिया। उन के कृष्ण तो स्वयं उन के पर्याय हैं। केवल इस गूढ़ तथ्य को पहचानने की आवश्यकता है। उन्हें विश्वास है कि श्री कृष्ण ही अज्ञान के तमसान्धकार को चीर कर जन–मानस में नव जीवन–ज्योति प्रज्वलित कर सकते हैं और तभी सम्भव है–सुन्दरम् की सृष्टि :–

'कृष्ण नाव छु आनन्द गण त् लो लो, कृष्ण नाव छु मूखि भऽक्तयन त् लो लो।
कृष्ण नाव छु प्राण प्राणियन त् लो लो, कृष्ण नाव छु अन्न प्राणन त् लो लों
मन म्योन बिन्दराबन त् लो लो, आत्म रूप नारायण त् लो लो[11]।।

शैवमत के सिद्धान्तों से प्रेरित होकर कृष्ण राज़दान ने असंख्य रचनाएँ

लिखी हैं जिनसे उन के शिव भक्त होने का प्रमाण मिलता है। देखा जाये तो उन की विचार परिधि तथा चिन्तन क्षेत्र का केन्द्र बिन्दु शिव है। वह शिव जो शक्ति के साथ मिलकर लीलामय जगत में अपने सौन्दर्यकण विखेर देता है। ध्यान देने योग्य बात यह है कि कहीं भी उन का काव्य व्यक्तित्व चिन्तन के भार से दब कर बोझिल नहीं हुआ है। यहाँ भक्ति को ह्रदय का सरस सहयोग प्राप्त हुआ, श्रद्धा में माधुर्य के कण धुल मिल गये और ज्ञान के शुष्क रेगिस्तान में प्यार की स्रोतस्विनी प्रवाहित हो उठी है। अपने इष्ट देव के प्रति श्रद्धा के सुमन अर्पित करते हुए राज़दान साहब यों पूजारत दिखाई देते हैं :–

'पम्पोश पादव सीऽत्यि यितम अस्तय अस्तय
चऱरनन वन्दय ज़ुव त जान ह्यथ वाँलिजवस तय,
राग् चानि सीऽत्यन पोन वुज़्यम नागरादस तय
पूज़ायलागस परम शिवस शिवनाथस तय।
ब्यल तय मादल व्यन गोलाब पम्पोश दस्तय
पूज़ायि लागस परम शिवस शिवनाथस तय'[12]।

'शिवपरिणय' का अध्ययन करने के पश्चात् यह बात स्पष्ट होती है कि शिव शक्ति की प्रणय कथा ने पण्डित जी को विशेष रूप से मोह लिया था। विभिन्न उपशीर्षकों के अतंर्गत उन्होंने इस सूक्ष्म कथा सूत्र को मूर्त रूप प्रदान करने का प्रयास किया है। यहाँ अनेकों पौराणिक सन्दर्भ, मिथकीय पात्र, जन श्रुति एवं लोक विश्वासों पर आधारित घटनाएँ, परम्परागत मान्यताएँ एवं विश्वास भक्त कवि को सर्जन के लिये प्रेरित करते हैं। दक्ष प्रजापति कायज्ञ, उमा का अग्नि समर्पण, हिमालय की कथा और पार्वती का जन्म, सती के द्वारा शिव की तलाश, शिव का रूप बदल कर उपस्थित होना और गौरी के प्रेम की परीक्षा लेना, जोगी और पार्वती के बीच बहस, शिव–पार्वती के विवाद का प्रसंग, दूल्हा का विरक्त जोगी रूप, मीनावती का विलाप और शिव की स्तुति, शिव का प्रसन्न होकर आनन्दमय रूप धारण कर पार्वती को वरण करना, लग्न और पुष्प पूजा, विदाई से पूर्ण स्वर्ण हिमपात आदि प्रमुख घटनाओं के आधार पर 'शिव परिणय' की सृष्टि कवि ने अपनी मौलिक प्रतिभा के आधार पर की है। शैवमतानुयायी कश्मीरी पण्डितों के लोक–विश्वासों की अत्यन्त मनमोहक अभिव्यक्ति इस वर्णनात्मक कथा–काव्य के माध्यम से हुई है।

एक अन्य महत्त्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि 'शिव परिणय' की कथा में स्थानीय रंग निखर कर सामने आया है। यहाँ तक कि शिवरात्रि का माहात्म्य भी कवि के आकर्षण का केन्द्र बन कर उसकी सर्जनात्मक प्रतिभा को महिमा मंडित बना देता है। कवि ने कश्मीरी पण्डितों के घरों में सम्पन्न होने वाले विवाह–उत्सव के लगभग समस्त सामाजिक एवं धार्मिक अनुष्ठानों का विशेष ध्यान रखा है। बारात का उचित स्वागत सत्कार, लग्न से पूर्व द्वारपूजा, लग्न पर कन्यादान, पुष्पपूजा, अग्नि के फेरे, विभिन्न देवी देवताओं को साक्षीमान कर वर द्वारा वधू को वरण करने की प्रतिज्ञा, अग्निहोत्र, दूल्हा को 'मननमाल' बान्धना, विदाई की तैयारी और स्त्रियों द्वारा 'मननमाल' बान्धना और स्त्रियों द्वारा लगातार 'वनवुन' गीत गाना इस कथा–काव्य को न केवल महिमा–मंडित कर देता है अपितु शिव–शक्ति की प्रणय–कथा को पौराणिक सन्दर्भो के साथ भी जोड़ देता है। लग्न–मंडप पर पुष्प–पूजा का कवि ने विशेषरूप से वर्णन किया है। मंत्रोचारण के साथ लग्न का यह विशिष्ट अनुष्ठान सम्पन्न होता है। यह दृश्य निस्सन्देह स्वर्गिक है और कवि इस का एक फोटोचित्र शब्दों के माध्यम से अत्यन्त कलात्मकता के साथ प्रस्तुत करते हैं :–

'अनिख वाऽनि दिथ चोपाऽरी पोश साऽरी
करनि लोंग पोशिपूज़ा चाऽर चाऽरी
करिथ प्रथ रंग् रंगै पोशनी ढेर
कोरुख शिव शिक्त रूपस आऽन्दि आऽन्दगेर
परान ओस वीद मंगल श्रुकि ब्रह्मा
उमा छय सूत्यि सूत्यी कर चि क्षमा
तिमन बास्योव न्यबर अन्दर शिवुई शिव
चलिख नीरिथ शिव सिन्द लोल् आलव[13]।

'शिव परिणय' में वर्णननात्मक कथा–शैली और गीति–शैली का समुचित संयोग हुआ है। कथा की मुख्य धारा में असंख्य शिव लीलायें भी प्रवाहित है। सम्पूर्ण कथा लोक मानस से जुड़ी है। एक विशिष्ट परिवेश (Environment) को ध्यान में रखकर राज़दान साहब शिव–पार्वती की विवाह कथा सुनाते हैं। शैव दर्शन और अद्वैतवादी विचार धारा का प्रभाव सम्पूर्ण रचना में सामूहिक रूप से देखने को मिलता है। यहाँ शिव त्रिक सिद्धान्त के आधार पर तीनों रूपों–शिवरूप, शक्ति

रूप तथा नर–रूप में लीला करते हुए मंत्र मुग्ध कर देते हैं। वही शिव जो जगत का मूल कारण है, 'सौन्दर्य का सार और आनन्द का स्रोत है तथा शैवमतानुयायी भक्तजनों की भक्ति का ठोस आधार है, इस लीला जगत में व्यक्त हो कर शक्ति के संग प्रकृति के कण कण में अपने सौन्दर्य का विस्तार पाता है।

स्पष्ट है कि कोई भी कश्मीरी भाषा और साहित्य का मर्मज्ञ कृष्ण राज़दान की सर्जनात्मक प्रतिभा की उपेक्षा नही कर सकता।

सन्दर्भ संकेत :

1.	'कुलियात राज़दान	:	सम्पादक सोमनाथ वीर, जम्मू कश्मीर कल्चरल अकादमी प्रकाशन–सन् 1984 ई॰ पृ॰ 363
2.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 268
3.	'कुलियात राज़दान'	:	पृष्ठ 358
4.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 266-67
5.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 208
6.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 211
7.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 398
8.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 515
9.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 280
10.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 471-472
11.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 218-219
12.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 118-199
13.	वही	:	पृष्ठ 239

लल्लद्यद के 'वाखों' पर कश्मीर शैवदर्शन का प्रभाव

—डॉ॰ बी॰ एन॰ कल्ला

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में लिखा है कि जब संसार में अत्याचार, अनाचार, पापाचार तथा दुराचार बढ़ता है, लोग अपने धर्म को भूलकर अथवा परित्याग कर कुमार्ग का अनुसरण करते हैं, पुण्य तथा पाप में कोई अन्तर नहीं रहता तब भगवान मानवता की रक्षा हेतु तथा दुष्टों का संहार करने के लिए किसी न किसी रूप में इस पृथ्वी पर प्रकट होते हैं। विश्व इतिहास के अध्ययन से यह बात अक्षरशः सत्य प्रमाणित होती है। कश्मीर में भी विदेशी कुशासकों के संकुचित दृष्टिकोण तथा धार्मिक असहिष्णुता के कारण अशान्ति तथा अन्धकार का वातावरण चिरकाल तक छा गया। परिणामस्वरूप जनता को अमानवीय यातनायें सहन करनी पड़ी जिससे मानवता के स्थान पर दानवता अट्टहास करने लगी। ऐसे युगों में सन्तों, महात्माओं तथा ऋषियों ने इस पावन भूमि में जन्म लेकर अपने दिव्य संदेशामृत से लोगों के दग्धहृदयों को सींचित करके समय समय पर उनका पथ प्रदर्शन सही दिशा में किया जिससे धार्मिक सहिष्णुता तथा मानवता के प्रकाशस्तम्भ को किसी रूप में बुझने न दिया। निः सन्देह, सांप्रदायिक सद्भावना का यह प्रकाशस्तम्भ सम्भ्रान्त तथा दिग्भ्रान्त जनमानस को किंकर्तव्यविमूढावस्था में हमेशा के लिए दिशानिर्देश करता रहेगा।

इतिहास के अनुसार चौदहवीं शती कश्मीर में उथलपुथल की मानी जाती है। कश्मीर की अन्तिम शासिका कोटारानी की हत्या के बाद शाहमीर ने सुलतान शमसुद्दीन के नाम से 1339 ई॰ में कश्मीर में अपना राज्य सुदृढ़ किया। हिन्दुओं का राज्य ख़त्म करने के लिए शाहमीर ने षड्यंत्र द्वारा अनेक हिन्दुओं को मरवा दिया। इस प्रकार उसका शासन दमन चक्र में बदल गया। इसी शती के प्रारम्भ में इस्लाम के प्रचार व प्रसार के लिए आये बुलबुलशाह ने कश्मीर के प्रथम अहिन्दू शासक तिब्बत के रेंचन शाह को अपने धर्म में दीक्षित किया। शमसउद्दीन के बाद उसके पुत्र अलाउद्दीन ने राज्य व्यवस्था संभाली। इसके शासनकाल में फारसी इतिहासकारों के अनुसार प्रकाशरूपा लल्ला अवतीर्ण हुई। अलाउद्दीन के बाद उसका बेटा शाहबुद्दीन सुल्तान बना। इसी समय शाह हमदान के नाम से विख्यात हज़रत सैयद अली हमदानी कश्मीर आये। श्रीनगर के फतेहकदल में स्थित वितस्ता (वर्तमान झेलम) के दायें किनारे महाकाली के सुप्रसिद्ध तीर्थ स्थान पर अपना 'अस्थान' बना दिया। 'वितस्ता माहात्म्य' के अनुसार इस महाकाली के बायें तरफ

'महाकाल' का मन्दिर भी था जिसके अवशेष इस समय हमें नही मिलते हैं। यहाँ पर यह बात ध्यातव्य है कि इसी शती में मध्यएशिया में तैमूर लंग के अत्याचारों से त्रस्त होकर सैकड़ों सादात ईरान छोड़कर कश्मीर में पनाह लेने के लिए आ गये। इनमें सईद हसन सिमनानी, अमीर कबीर आदि उल्लेखनीय हैं। इन्होंने यद्वा तद्वा मुस्लिम धर्म का प्रचार करके लोगों को जबरदस्ती से मुस्लिम धर्म में दीक्षित किया। ऐसी संकट कालीन विषम स्थितियों में ऐसे महान् व्यक्तित्व की आवश्यकता थी जो लोगों को विश्वबन्धुत्व की भावना, अहिंसा, शान्ति तथा प्रेम का संदेश देकर मानवता की रक्षा के साथ सद्भावना पूर्ण वातावरण पैदा करके दो संस्कृतियों के बीच में उत्पन्न कटुता के स्थान पर सर्वग्राही मधुरता ला सके। इसी काल में यहां एक नये सूर्य का उदय हुआ जिसकी किरणों से सारा लोक आलोकित हुआ। यह वे भौतिक सूर्य नहीं है जो वैज्ञानिकों के कथनानुसार कालान्तर में नष्ट हो जायेगा किन्तु यह वह चैतन्यमय तथा शाश्वत सूर्य है जो प्रलयकाल में भी अक्षुण रहेगा। वह सूर्य धर्म निरपेक्षता तथा राष्ट्रीय एकता की प्रतीक परमयोगिनी लल्लद्यद थी जिसकी प्रेरेणाप्रद किरणें सैंकड़ों सालों के बाद आज भी अज्ञान तिमिरावृत लोगों को प्रकाश देकर उन्हें सन्मार्ग की ओर ले जाती है।

लल्लद्यद का जन्म पांपोर के समीप सिंहपुर (वर्तमान स्यमपोर) नामक गांव में एक प्रतिष्ठित ब्राह्मण के घर में हुआ था। उसका ब्याह बाल्यावस्था में ही पांपोर गांव के प्रसिद्ध ब्राह्मण घराने में हुआ। उसके पति का नाम सोन पंडित बताया जाता है। लल्लद्यद की शिक्षा दीक्षा अपने कुलगुरू श्री सिद्धकण्ठ या सिद्धमोल से प्राप्त हुई। कुछ विद्वानों के अनुसार यह सिद्धमोल "महानयप्रकाश" का रचनाकार श्री शितिकण्ठ है। अपने गुरु से शैवदर्शन का गम्भीर अध्ययन करके यह आध्यात्मिक मार्ग की और प्रवृत्त हुई। ससुराल के दूषित वातावरण से क्षुब्ध होकर इसने अंत में गृहस्थ जीवन छोड़ दिया। सत्य की खोज में निकली।

लल्लद्यद कश्मीरी साहित्य में पहली सर्वोत्कृष्ट कवयित्री मानी जाती है जिन्होंने अपनी मातृभाषा में 'वाख' (संस्कृत वाक्) लिखकर जनता को समुचित रीति से पथ प्रदर्शन किया तथा जन साधारण को मातृभाषा के माध्यम द्वारा वह सूक्ष्म दर्शन समझाया जो लल्लद्यद से पहले शैवदर्शन के मर्मज्ञों आचार्य वसुगुप्त, सोमानन्द, उत्पलदेव तथा अभिनवगुप्त आदि आचार्यो ने संस्कृत में समझाया था। वस्तुतः लल्लद्यद क़े 'वाख' दो संस्कृतियों के धाराप्रवाह के संगम पर अविनाशी सेतु बनकर जाति, वर्ण तथा भेद के बिना सबों के लिए मानसिक यातायात के साधन बन गये।

इनके 'वाख' सारगर्भित, गम्भीर तथा भावपूर्ण हैं। भाषा शैली हृदयग्राही है। इन 'वाखों' के गम्भीर अध्ययन के बाद हम इस निष्कर्ष पर पंहुचते हैं कि उनके 'वाख' शैवदर्शन के प्रभाव से अछूते न रहे। चौदहवीं शताब्दी के पहले जो कश्मीरी कवि पैदा हुए उनकी अमर रचनाओं में कश्मीर शैवदर्शन का गहरा प्रभाव स्पष्ट रूप से पाया जाता है जैसे महेश्वरानन्द (बारहवीं शती) की 'महार्थमंजरी' तथा शितिकण्ठ (तेरहंवी शती) का 'महानय प्रकाश'। इस दार्शनिक परिप्रेक्ष्य में यदि लल्लद्यद के वाखों में इस दर्शन के सिद्धान्त देंष्टिगोचर होते हैं। तो इसमें आश्चर्य ही क्या ?

इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि कश्मीर का गौरव साहित्यिक दृष्टि से आठवीं शती से बारहवी शती तक बहुत ऊंचा रहा है। कश्मीर के इस स्वर्णयुग में शैवदर्शन के आचार्यो–वसुगुप्त, सोमानन्द, उत्पलदेव तथा अभिनवगुप्त जैसे दार्शनिकों ने इस दर्शन को पराकाष्ठा तक पहुंचा दिया, तबसे इसका प्रचार एवं प्रसार चौदहवी शताब्दी तक ज़ोरों पर था। यह दर्शन प्रायः जनता के उच्चवर्ग ने अपनाया था और लल्लेश्वरी ने एक जागरूक कवयित्री की तरह इसे जनसाधारण तक पंहुचाने का प्रयत्न किया जिससे यह बहुत ही लोकप्रिय बन गया था। यहां यह कहना असंगत न होगा कि लल्लद्यद के कारण ही नुन्दऋषि के श्रुकों (श्लोकों) पर इस दर्शन का प्रभाव स्पष्टरूप से मालूम होता है।

इतिहास इस तथ्य का साक्षी है कि आठवीं तथा नवीं शताब्दी में यहां एक धार्मिक क्रान्ति हुई। आठवीं शती में कश्मीर में जगद्गुरू शंकराचार्य और शैवाचार्यो के सांझे प्रचार से बौद्ध धर्म को काफी धक्का लगा। बौद्ध धर्म कश्मीर में ईसाई के दौर से पहले फैला हुआ था। इसकी उन्नति कश्मीर की उपत्यका में सम्राट अशोक (272-232 ई॰ पू॰) के काल से सातवीं शताब्दी तक काफी हुई थी। इसका प्रमाण हमें चीन के सुप्रसिद्ध विद्वान ह्यूनसांग (सातवी शताब्दी) के यात्राविवरण से मिलता है। बौद्धधर्म के ह्रास से यहां शैवमत पुनः पनपने लगा। नववीं शताब्दी में कश्मीर विभिन्न दार्शनिक धाराओं का संगम बन गया। ये धाराएं भारत से वैदिकों, बौद्धों, वैयाकरणों, सांख्यमतवालों, नैयायिकों, वेदान्तियों और योगदर्शन की मठिकाओं (स्कूलों) से आई। इन मतों के संगम से कश्मीर में एक नये दर्शन ने जन्म लिया जिसको साधारण लोग 'कश्मीर शैवमत' कहते हैं। किन्तु यह एक विशेष दर्शन है जिसका नाम 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन' है। इस दर्शन के अध्ययन से मालूम होता है कि इस दर्शन को समृद्ध बनाने के लिए आचार्यो–विशेषकर उत्पलदेव ने विभिन्न दार्शनिक विचार धाराएं इन मतों से ली। किन्तु कश्मीर के

दार्शनिकों ने यह नया दर्शन अपने ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया जो कश्मीर शैवागमों पर आश्रित है। प्रत्यभिज्ञा का अर्थ अपने आप को पहचानना अर्थात उत्तराधिकार में मिली हुई शक्तियों इच्छा, ज्ञान और क्रिया को जानना है। इस शैवदर्शन के अमूल्य सिद्धान्त क्या हैं ? इस पर प्रकाश डालना आवश्यक है।

इस दर्शन के अनुसार यह दुनियां सत्य है, वेदान्त की तरह मिथ्या नहीं है, जैसे 'ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या' अर्थात् ब्रह्म सच्चा है तथा ज़गत मिथ्या है। यह जगत् शाश्वत सत्य का साकार रूप है। आत्मा चैतन्य है जैसे चैतन्यमात्मा। यह चेतन तीन शक्तियों इच्छा शक्ति, ज्ञान शक्ति तथा क्रिया शक्ति का सम्मिश्रण है। इस दर्शन के अनुसार इस विश्व का स्रोत परमशिव (Ultimate Reality) माना गया है। जिसके दो रूप हैं। प्रकाश तथा विमर्श। ये दो रूप आपस में ऐसे जुड़े हुए हैं कि एक दूसरे से अलग नही हो सकते। इन्हीं दो शक्तियों से ईश्वर ने छत्तीस बाह्य तत्वों को प्रकट में लाकर इस विश्व को अण्डज, स्वेदज, उद्विज तथा योनिज चतुर्विधात्मक पैदा किया। प्रकाश शिवरूप है। विमर्श शक्तिरूप है। इस विश्व को पैदा करने वाला और इसका शक्तिमान स्वामी एक महेश्वर या परमशिव है। जैसे 'शक्तयोऽस्ति जगत्सर्व शक्तिमान् स महेश्वरः'। इस विश्व में पैदा होने वाले सब लोग इस परमपिता महेश्वर की सन्तान हैं। महेश्वर या परमशिव प्रकाशरूप है और प्राणी प्रकाश के कण हैं। इस दृष्टि से भी सब लोग इस परमपिता महेश्वर की संतान है और सब लोग एक दूसरे के बराबर हैं एवं सब भाई–भाई है। इस दर्शन के अनुसार महेश्वर एक ऐसा तत्त्व है जो सब शक्तियों से भरपूर है। यह सर्वज्ञ (सब कुछ जानने वाला) सर्वकर्ता (सब कुछ बनाने वाला) सर्व स्वतन्त्र शक्तिमान (अपनी सारी शक्तियों का स्वतन्त्ररूप से स्वामी) है। इसके विपरीत एक जीव अल्पज्ञ (सीमित सोंचने की शक्ति वाला) अल्प कर्ता (काम करने की सीमित शक्ति रखने वाला) अल्प शक्तिमान (सीमित शक्तियों को रखने वाला) है। जिस तरह परमशिव या महेश्वर अपनी अनन्त शक्तियों तथा अपनी स्वतन्त्र शक्ति से इस विश्व को बनाने का काम करता है उसी तरह एक जीव भी अपनी दुनिया और भाग्य को खुद बनाता है। अल्प स्वतन्त्र शक्तिमान होने के कारण जीव को अपने दायरे के अन्दर यह सब कुछ बनाने के लिए सीमित स्वातन्त्र्य शक्ति प्राप्त है और वह अपने सत् विचारों तथा सत्कर्मों से न केवल अपने जीवन को सफल और समृद्ध बना सकता है बल्कि शुभ विचारों तथा सत्कर्मों को अपनाने से समस्त विश्व की समृद्धि के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका भी निभा सकता है।

प्रत्यभिज्ञा दर्शन के अनुसार एक मनुष्य को घर तथा दुनिया त्याग कर गिरि–कन्दराओं में उपासना करने की आवश्यकता नही है, वह गृहस्थाश्रम में रहकर

भी अपने आप को परमशिव के पद तक पहुंचा सकता है। इसके सिद्धान्त ग्रन्थों में मूर्ति पूजा आदि पर बल नहीं दिया गया है। इसमें जातपात का कोई बन्धन नहीं है। यही कारण है भारत के षट्दर्शन में कश्मीर शैवदर्शन अधिक लोकप्रिय बन गया है क्योंकि अन्य दर्शनों ने प्रायः अधिकतर अध्यात्मवाद पर जोर दिया भौतिक वाद पर नहीं। प्रायः इन सभी मठिकाओं के प्रभाव से हम सामाजिक तथा आर्थिक उद्ददेश्यों में अग्रसर न हो सके किन्तु कश्मीर के आचार्यों तथा चिन्तकों ने ऐसा दर्शन शास्त्र बनाया जिन्होंने आध्यात्मिक उन्नति के साथ साथ भौतिकवाद की ओर भी ध्यान दिया। यही दर्शन "अभेद शैव दर्शन " के नाम से प्रसिद्ध है। इस अद्वय शैवदर्शन ने इस बात का विरोध किया कि मनुष्य को अपने भावों (Emotions) तथा विषयों (Senses) का दमन किसी प्रकार से नहीं करना चाहिये क्योंकि इनका दमन मनोवैज्ञानिकों के मतानुसार मनुष्य के लिए बहुत ही हानिप्रद तथा भयंकर है। वस्तुतः यह दर्शन हमारे दैनिक जीवन के साथ सम्बन्धित है। इसलिए इसका पहलू प्रैगमटिक (Pragmatic) है। कश्मीर के दार्शनिकों ने कहा कि मनुष्य को गृहस्थ जीवन में रहकर भी शैव योग का अभ्यास करना चाहिए जिससे वह योगभ्यास में सफलता प्राप्त करके परमानन्द का अनुभव कर सके। इस अवस्था में उसे विषयों के भोग में कमी का अनुभव होगा। क्योंकि अपने आपको पहचानने में उसे अधिक आनन्द मिलेगा। अंतहीन तथा शुद्ध प्रकाश में उसे यह सारा ब्रह्माण्ड शिव (Ultimate Reality) दिखाई देगा। वास्तव में यह ब्रह्माण्ड शांत अवस्था में शिव किन्तु व्यक्तरूप में यह शिव शक्ति का रूप बनता है जो उसके गुण का (परमशिव) का एक अभिन्नरूप माना जाता है। यद्यपि यह सारा ब्रह्माण्ड शक्तिरूप में अलग अलग हो जाता है तो भी यह परिपूर्ण है। यह प्रत्येक रूप में संपूर्ण है। इसकी परिपूर्णता कभी भी नही किसी भी रूप में खत्म नही होती है। सत्य तो यह है क्रिया की अवस्था में एक तत्त्व अनेक तत्त्वों का रूप धारण करता है। इस अवस्था में जब एक तत्त्व अनेक तत्त्वों में प्रकट होता है, उससे इस एक तत्त्व की परिपूर्णता में कोई तबदीली या कोई विकार नहीं होता। यह भाव निम्न श्लोक में इस प्रकार पाया जाता है–

"शक्तयोऽस्ति जगत्सर्वं शक्तिमान स महेश्वरः" अर्थात् इस शिव की शक्ति यह सारी दुनिया है क्योंकि वह स्वयं 'महेश्वर' है। ऊपर बताया गया है कि वेदान्त के अनुसार जगत का व्यक्तरूप (Manifestation) झूठा तथा भ्रान्तिपूर्ण है किन्तु शैवदर्शन के अनुसार इसका व्यक्तरूप शक्ति पर आधारित है। इस सत्य को कोई अप्रमाणित सिद्ध नहीं कर सकता है। यह दुनिया जिसमें हम रहते हैं, इस दर्शन के मुताबिक भोग्य है त्याज्य नही। मगर वेदान्त के अनुसार यह दुनिया स्थायी

नहीं भ्रममय है। शैवदर्शन इस तथ्य पर पूर्णरूप से प्रकाश डालता है कि यह ब्रह्माण्ड परमशिव में पहले से ही उसी प्रकार विद्यमान है जिस प्रकार बीज में वृक्ष के सारे अंग–पत्ते, शाखांए, फल–फूल आदि विद्यमान हैं इस प्रकार यह ब्रह्मांड शक्ति का ही प्रसार है जो शिव से अलग–थलग नहीं है। परमशिव एक ऐसा तत्त्व है जो प्रकाश तथा विमर्शमय है। ये दोनों तत्त्व अन्योन्याश्रित है। इस परमशिव के सागर में दो प्रकार की लहरें चैतन्य तथा शक्ति की लहरें विद्यमान है जिससे इस ब्रह्माण्ड के विभिन्न पदार्थ (Objects) अस्तित्व में आ जाते हैं। किन्तु इसका मूलाधार यही परमतत्त्व है जिसका नाम इस दर्शन में परमशिव या महेश्वर रखा गया है, जो प्रकाश तथा विमर्शमय है। इस विचार धारा के अनुसार एक प्रमाता (जीव) जो परमशिव का ही एक कण माना जाता है वह भी प्रकाश तथा विमर्शयुक्त है, अर्थात् ये दोनों तत्त्व उसमें पाये जाते हैं। प्रकाश अन्तर्मुखी है तथा विमर्श बहिर्मुखी, यानी विमर्श परमशिव का साकार रूप। जिस तरह चैतन्य तथा प्रतीति (Awareness) ये दो भिन्न–भिन्न रूप नहीं उसकी प्रकार प्रकाश और विमर्श भिन्न भिन्न नहीं हैं। इससे यह निष्कर्ष निकलता है कि प्रकाशरूप आभास और विमर्शरूप प्रतीति, दोनों परस्पर सदा रहते हैं। आभास ज्ञान है और प्रतीति जानने की क्रिया है। एक जीव को अपने प्रकाश और अपने विमर्श के बल से विषय का प्रकाश और विमर्श भी होता है। परमेश्वर भी शुद्ध प्रकाशरूप होता हुआ शुद्ध विमर्श भी है। अतः उसे अपनी असीम, शुद्ध और परिपूर्ण चेतना की सत्ता का विमर्श और प्रकाश सदा होते रहते हैं। वस्तुतः उस तत्त्व को शुद्ध, असीम और परिपूर्ण प्रकाश और उसी प्रकार के विमर्श का परम सामरस्य कहा जा सकता है।

ऐसे सामरस्यात्मक परतत्त्व को सिद्धों की भाषा में शुद्ध, असीम और परिपूर्ण संवित् कहा जाता है। इस प्रकार की संवित् को ही परब्रह्म, परमेश्वर, परिपूर्ण भगवान आदि नाम दिए जा सकते हैं। शैवदर्शन में इसी को परमशिव कहा गया है। इसका दूसरा नाम अनुत्तर तत्त्व भी है। वस्तुतः यही सब कुछ है इससे भिन्न कोई पदार्थ नहीं। जो कुछ हमें संसार में नज़र आता है वह वास्तव में यही है। यही विश्व के पदार्थों में व्याप्त है। इसका यह गुण स्वातन्त्र्य शक्ति है। इसका संकेत डॉ॰ के॰ सी॰ पाण्ड़े ने 'अभिनवगुप्त' नामक पुस्तक में इस प्रकार दिया है :–

> "This all inclusive universal consciousness is called Anuttara (The Highest Reality) or para or purna samvit (Supreme or Perfect consciousness) in this system. As the word Anuttara implies, it is a reality beyond which there is nothing. It is therefore free from all limitations. It is undefinable in terms of ordinary everyday life"

इस प्रकार इसके अध्ययन से मालूम होता है कि शैवदर्शन में रूढ़िवाद तथा छूतछात की कोई गुंजाइश नहीं है। इसके मुख्य सिद्धान्तों मे मनुष्य को बहुमुखी विकास के साथ–साथ उनका नैतिक आचरण उन्नत करना है। उपनिषदों के समान इस दर्शन का उद्देश्य विश्वशान्ति है। यही एक ऐसा अमूल्य दर्शन है जो मनुष्य की रचनात्मक शक्तियों को उभारता है तथा पलायनवाद (Escapism) का विरोध करता है। वस्तुतः यह मानववादी दर्शन (Philosophy of Humanism) है क्योंकि यह दर्शन अद्वयवाद पर आधारित है जिसके कारण एक मनुष्य तथा दूसरे मनुष्य में कोई अन्तर नही दिखाई देता। कश्मीरी साहित्य की प्रथम कवयित्री, लल्लद्यद शैवदर्शन की मर्मज्ञ थी क्योंकि उसने अपने गुरू के पास इसका गम्भीर अध्ययन किया था। वह इस अधीत ज्ञानराशि को जन साधारण तक पहुंचाना चाहती थी। इसलिए उसने अपने वाखों में शैवदर्शन को समोकर दो संस्कृतियों के कारण उत्पन्न मिलीजुली प्रतिक्रिया को सुधारने की भरसक कोशिश की। उसने प्रत्यक्षरूप से हिन्दुओं पर हो रहे जुल्म को देखा था। उनकी निर्मम हत्या से उसका मन उद्वेलित हुआ। महर्षि वाल्मीकी की तरह उसका शोक 'वाखों' के माध्यम से प्रकट हुआ। इसका ज्वलन्त प्रमाण निम्न 'वाक्' (क. 'वाख') में पूर्णरूप से मिलता है–

"शिवछुय थलि थलि रोज़ान मो ज़ान ह्योंद त् मुसलमान।
त्रुकुय छुख त पान प्रज़नाव स्वय छय साहिबस ज़ाऽनी ज़ान"।।

इस 'वाख' में लल्लद्यद इस बात पर ज़ोर देती है कि शिवसर्वव्यापक है। वस्तुतः यह ब्रह्माण्ड उसी का रूप है। जिस तरह उसके प्रकाश में कोई भेद दिखाई नही देता है उसी तरह हिन्दू तथा मुसल्मान में कोई भेद नज़र नही आता है। हिन्दू मुसलमान दोनों प्रकाश के कण हैं क्योंकि दोनों ही उसी के स्वरूप हैं। अपने आप को पहचान कर ही मनुष्य शिव का असली स्वरूप जान सकता है, अर्थात् उसे वास्तविक अभेद ज्ञान प्राप्त होता है। दूसरे शब्दों में 'अहमिदम्' यानी मैं ही यह हूँ। मुझ से कोई चीज़ अलग–थलग नहीं है। इस तरह आत्म प्रत्यमिज्ञा शिव शास्त्र की 'प्रत्यभिज्ञा' ही इस दर्शन का सार है। इस का उदाहरण हमें इस दूसरे 'वाख' में भी मिलता है।

लल बु द्रायस लोलरे छांड़ान लूसुम द्यन क्यहो राथ।
वुछुम पंड़िथ पननि गरे सुय म्य रोट् मस न्यछतुर त् साथ।।

इस 'वाख' में वह बताती है कि मैं लल्ला प्रीत की मतवाली सत्य को ढूंढने निकल पड़ी। ढूंढ़ते ढूंढते दिन ढला, रातें बीती। अन्ततः देखा तो पंडित (परमशिव) मेरे अपने घर में ही था। वही शुभ मुहूर्त मैं ने अपनाया अर्थात् अपने

आप में उसे पाना ही मेरे लिए एक शुभ घड़ी थी। वास्तव में मनुष्य उसी प्रकार ईश्वर को बाहिर ढूंढता है जिस प्रकार मृग कस्तूरी की सुगन्ध को बाहिर ढूंढता हैं मगर उसे यह मालूम नही होता है कि यह सुगन्ध तो उसके नाभिस्थान में ही विद्यमान है। मनुष्य भी मलों (आणवमल, मायीयमल तथा कार्म मल) के कारण परम शिव को बाहिर ढूंढता रहता है। उसे यह मालूम नहीं है कि वस्तुतः वह मुझमें ही निवास करता है। शैवदर्शन के अनुसार प्रमाता (Individual soul) परमशिवरूप अणु है। अपने आप को पहचानने से ही वह मूलतत्त्व को जान सकता है। इसके लिए उसे अन्य साधनों पर निर्भर नही रहना पड़ता है। यह रास्ता उसके लिए बहुत ही सहज है। इसलिए यह अयत्न सिद्धिरूप ज्ञान है। अतः आचार्य उत्पलदेव ने ईश्वरप्रत्यमिज्ञा कारिका में इसका संकेत इस प्रकार किया है–

जनस्यायत्नसिद्ध्यर्थमुदयाकर सूनना,
ईश्वरप्रत्यमिज्ञेयमुत्पलेनोपादिता।।

और लल्लद्यद कहती है :–

परान परान ज्य़व ताल फोजिम चे़ युग्य क्रय तजिम न् ज़ांह।
सुमरन फिरान न्युठ त् अंगुज गजिम मनुच दुई मालि चजिम न् जांह।।

अर्थ "पढ़ते पढ़ते मेरी जीभ थक गई और तालु विशीर्ण हो गया। मगर तेरे योग्य क्रिया का विधान कभी मेरी बुद्धि में न आ गया। माला फेरते हुए अंगूठा और अंगुलियां गल गई, पर आह्! मन का द्वैतभाव नष्ट न हुआ"।

इस 'वाख' में वह बताती है कि माला फेरते–फेरते मनुष्य के दिल से किसी प्रकार की दुविधा नहीं मिटती। माला जपना केवल बाह्य आडम्बर है। इस 'वाख' में संत कबीरदास की तरह बाहरी दिखावे और माला जपने को व्यर्थ माना गया है–

माला फेरत जुग भया मिटा न मन का फेर।
करका मनका ड़ारिके मनका मनका फेर।।

वास्तव में दुई तब मिटती है जिस समय मनुष्य विश्व के सब जीवों को एक ही समझे। इस प्रकार का ज्ञान उसे तब आ सकता है जब वह इस ब्रह्माण्ड को उसी का (परमशिव का) रूप समझे। यही दृष्टिकोण लल्लद्यद इस 'वाख' में प्रस्तुत करती हैः–

पर त् पान येम्य सोमुय मोन येम्य ह्यू मोन द्यन क्यहो राथ।
येम्य स्य अद्वयी मन सपुन, तमी हो डयूठुय स्वर ग्वर नाथ।।

अर्थ :–'जिसने अपने और पराये को समान माना। जिसकी नज़र में दिन और रात एक है, जिसको मन से द्वैतभाव नष्ट हुआ हो। उसी ने सुर गुरूनाथ (परमशिव) के दर्शन किये अर्थात् वह परमशिव बन गया।

यह सारा विश्व परमशिव का विमर्शरूप है। विश्वोत्तीर्ण अवस्था में वह प्रकाशरूप है। विश्वमय अवस्था में वह विमर्श रूप है। इस दशा को प्रमाता तब समझ सकता है जब उसमें 'सर्वात्मभाव' की भावना आ जाती है। सर्वात्मभाव से तात्पर्य विश्व के समस्त जीवों को समान दृष्टि से देखना है। इस विषय में उपनिषदों का कथन इस प्रकार है :–

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मान्येवानु पश्यति,।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजगुप्सते।।
यस्मिनसर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः।।

जो अपने आप में समस्त जीवों को और अपना आप सब जीवों में देखता है वैसा मनुष्य किसी के साथ घृणा व द्वेष नहीं करता, क्योंकि वह इस तथ्य को जानता है कि सब जीव उसी (परमशिव) के रूप हैं। एकत्व दृष्टि के कारण न उस अवस्था में दु:ख है न मोह–

लल ब् चायस स्वमन् बाग बरस
वुछुम शिव त् शख्त मीलिथ त वाह।
तति लय म्य कऽरमस अमृत सरस,
ज़िन्दय मरस त् कर्यम क्याह।।

अर्थ :–मैं लल्ला जब स्वमन रूपी बाग के द्वार से भीतर गई अर्थात् जब मैं अन्तर्मुख हुई तो देखा शिव् शक्ति से मिला हुआ था। मैं आनन्द मग्न होकर वही शिव शक्ति संगम के साक्षात्कार रूप अमृतसर में विलीन हो गई। इस दशा में मैं जीते जी मर गई, अर्थात् जीवित अवस्था में संकल्पमय विषयवासनाओं का त्याग किया। मुझे अब किसकी चिन्ता है?

इस 'वाख' में लल्लद्यद शिव तथा शक्ति के विषय में वही विचार प्रकट करती है जो शैवागमों में वर्णित है जैसे :–

शिवश्च शक्तिमद्रूपात्व्यतिरेकं न गच्छति।
तादात्म्यमनयोर्विद्योच्चन्द्रचन्द्रिकयोरिव।।

जैसे चांद चांदनी से अलग–थलग नहीं है वैसे शिव शक्ति से अलग–थलग नहीं है।

कव छुख दिवान अनिने बछ त्रुकुय छुख अन्दर अच़।
शिव छुय अत्य तय कुन मो गछ़ सहज़ कथि म्यानि करतो पछ।।

अर्थ :– क्यों यूं ही छाती पीट रही हो ? यदि तू विदग्ध अथवा त्रिकशास्त्रज्ञ है तो अन्तर्मुख हो जा। शिव वही भीतर है अतः तुझे कंही जाने की आवश्यकता नहीं। मेरी इस सहज स्वाभाविक बातों पर विश्वास कर।

इस 'वाख' की व्याख्या करते समय हम इससे यह निष्कर्ष निकालते हैं कि अन्तर्मुख होकर ही हम परमशिव को पहचान सकते हैं अर्थात् प्रकाशरूप में वह हमारे भीतर ही है। जिस तरह फूल में सुगन्ध है उसी तरह हमारी आत्मा में उसका सदा निवास है। ऐसा ही उद्‌गार लल्लद्यद के अन्य 'वाख' में इस तरह मिलता है

मूढो क्रय छय न धारुन त पारून मूढो क्रय छय न रछिन्य काय।
मूढो क्रय छय न् दीह संदारून, सहज व्यचारून छुय वुप्‌दीश।।

अर्थ हे मूढ! व्रत धारण करना तथा पारन करना तुम्हारा कर्त्तव्य कर्म नही। न ही शरीर की रक्षामात्र करना कर्तव्य कर्म है। देह को संवारना भी कर्तव्य कर्म नही। सहज विचार अर्थात् आत्मज्ञान (Perception) वास्तविक उपदेश है।

इस वाक्य में लल्लद्यद इस बात पर बल देती है कि अपने आप का ज्ञान अर्थात् प्रत्यभिज्ञा ही उपदेश है। व्रतविधान तो निरर्थक है। शैवदर्शन भी प्रायः व्रतविधान पर विश्वास नहीं करता है।

गगन च़्य भूतल च़्य च़्य द्यन पवन त् राथ।
अर्‌ग च़न्दन पोश पवन च़य छुख सोरूय लोगि ज़ि क्याह।

अर्थ—तू आकाश है तू भूतल है तू दिन है तू पवन और रात।
तू अर्घ चन्दन तू पवन पुष्प है तू सर्वस्व है चढ़ांऊ क्या?

इस 'वाख के अनुसार यह विश्व परमशिव का व्यक्तरूप है। अतः उसका अस्तित्व विभिन्न रूपों स्थूल तथा सूक्ष्मरूपों आकाश, पृथ्वी, दिन, रात, अर्घ, चन्दन, फूल आदि में दृष्टिगोचर होता है। विमर्श के रूप में यह उसी के विभिन्न रूप हैं। अर्थात् ब्रह्माण्ड का सार वही है। अतः ये पदार्थ उन्हें (परमशिव) समर्पण करना व्यर्थ है।

लल्लद्यद का इष्टदेव शिव था। इसीलिए उनके वाखों में अन्य देवों की अपेक्षा शिव का नाम बार बार आता है। उसका निम्न 'वाख' इस विषय में दृष्टव्य है :–

"रंगस मंज़ छुय ब्योन–व्योन लबुन सोरूय च़ालख बरख स्वख।
च़ख रष त् बार गालख, अदय ड़ेषख शिव सुन्द म्वख।।

यह विश्व एक प्रकार का रंगमंच है। इस विश्व के रंगमंच में ईश्वर के अनेक रूप तथा अनेक दृश्य हैं। विविधता में या अनेकरूपता में उसे पाना बड़ी बात है। सब कुछ सहन करके ही प्रमाता शिव को (वास्तविकता को सत्य को) जान सकता है और उसे परम सुख की प्राप्ति हो सकती है, सत्य को जानने के लिए उसे क्रोध, ईर्ष्या तथा वैर छोड़ना पड़ेगा

च़्यथ तुरग वगि ह्यथ रोटुम, च़्यलिथ मिलविथ दशि नाडि वाव।
तवै शशिकल व्यगलिथ वुछुम शुन्यस शून्या मीलिथ गव।।

अर्थ :– चित्त रूपी घोड़े को लगाम देकर थाम लिया। प्राणाभ्यास द्वारा दश नाड़ियों के श्वासोश्वास का बांध लिया तब कहीं शशिकला पिघली और मेरे पार्थिव शरीर में उतर आई और शून्य में शून्य विलीन हो गया। शून्य शब्द का अर्थ भिन्न भिन्न आचार्यों ने विभिन्न रूप से किया है। त्रिक शास्त्र में शून्य सात प्रकार का मान लिया गया है। 'स्वच्छन्द तन्त्र' के चौथे पटल में इसका वर्णन इस प्रकार है :–

षट् शून्यानि परित्यज्य सप्तमे तु लयं कुरू।
तच्छून्यं तु परं सूक्ष्म सर्वावस्थाविवर्जितम्।।
अशून्यं शून्यमित्युक्तं शून्यं चाभाव उच्यते।
अभावः स समुद्दिशे यत्रभावाः क्षयं गताः।।

इस प्रकार सातवां शून्य बहुत ही सूक्ष्म है। यह वह शून्य है जो सब अवस्थाओं से परे है। वैसे तो शून्य शब्द का अर्थ 'अभाव है' किन्तु यह वह शून्य नहीं है जो बिल्कुल खाली है और जहां कुछ नहीं है। यह वह शून्य है जो चैतन्यमय

तथा आनन्दरूप है, जिसे हम शैवदर्शन में परमशिव कहते है जो तीस तत्त्वों से ऊपर है। 'विज्ञान भैरव' में भी इसे शिवशून्य कहा गया है जैसे :–

स्वतन्त्रं परिपूर्णं च शिवाख्यं शून्यधाम तत्।
तत्त्वानि यत्र लीयन्ते यस्मात्समुदयन्ति च।

तत्त्वेश्वरास्ततो जामास्तत्रैव निवसन्ति च
क्षीयन्ते किल तत्रैव शिवाख्ये शून्य धामनि।।

वास्तव में यह शून्य खाली (Void) नहीं है। यह स्वतन्त्र तथा परिपूर्ण है। यही शिव शून्य माना जाता है जिसमें सारे तत्त्व लय होते हैं और जिसमें से सारे तत्त्व पैदा होते हैं। अतः यह बौद्धों का शून्य नहीं है जहां कुछ नहीं है। नागार्जुन ने जो अर्थ शून्य का किया है। लल्लद्यद का तात्पर्य उस शून्य से नही है। उसका शून्य वह शून्य है जिसकी व्याख्या शैवदार्शनिकों ने की है।

उपरोक्त प्रमाणों तथा उसके अन्य 'वाखों' से भी प्रतीत होता है कि उस महामाहेश्वरी परमयोगिनी लल्लद्यद पर अपने देश के सुलभ शैवदर्शन की अन्य दर्शनों की अपेक्षा अमिट छाप है।

निश्चय ही लल्लद्यद का महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान कश्मीरी साहित्य में हमेशा के लिए अमर रहेगा। राष्ट्रीय तथा विश्वबन्धुत्व की भावनाओं से ओतप्रोत राष्ट्रवादी कवयित्री के वाखों के प्रचार व प्रसार से राष्ट्रीय एकता की आधारशिला सुदृढ़ बन सकती है।

सन्दर्भ संकेत :

1. Recognition of Man's Supreme Inheritance : Dr. R. K. Kaw. (P. P. 39)
2. कश्मीर शैवदर्शन : डा॰ बलजिन्नाथ पण्डित (पृ॰ 55-56)
3. प्रो॰ जयालाल कौल तथा प्रो॰ नन्दलाल कौल : लल्लद्यद (उर्दू मृ पृ॰ 100)
4. Doctrine of Recognition : Dr. R. K. Kaw
5. कोशुर शैवमत (कश्मीरी मृ) : डा॰ बी॰ एन॰ कल्ला।
6. लल्लद्यद त् बेयन फलसफन सऽत्य हिशर : शीराज़ा, लल्लद्यद विशेषांक (पृ॰ 187-204)
7. नुन्दयोंष त् शैवफलसफ : डा॰ बदरीनाथ कल्ला, (नुन्दयोंषि प्रकाशक ज॰ क॰ कलचरल अकादेमी, श्रीनगर)।
8. Kashmir Shaivism : Dr. B. N. Kalla, Encyclopaeldia of Indian Literature, Pub. Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi

कश्मीरी लोकमानस में आध्यात्मिक चेतना : संदर्भ कश्मीर की लोक कथाएँ

–पृथ्वीनाथ मधुप

'लोक' से मतलब लोगों के समूह से है। भरतमुनि के टीकाकार आचार्य अभिनवगुप्त ने भी "लोको नाम जनपदवासी जन"[1] : 'याने जनपदों में रहने वाले लोगों को लोक, कह कर इस बात की पुष्टि की है। इस बात को यों भी कहा जा सकता है कि 'लोक' किसी ख़ास इलाक़े में रहने वाले आम लोगों को कहा जाता है। यही आम लोग या 'लोक' लोक–साहित्य के रचने वाले माने गये हैं। लोक साहित्य की उत्पत्ति का कारण लोक या मनुष्य का स्वभाव रहा होगा क्योंकि मनुष्य के मन को जब तरह–तरह की अनुभूतियों से गुज़रना पड़ा होगा तो वह अपने स्वभाव के कारण इन अनुभूतियों को अपने सीने में क़ैद कर के न रख सका होगा। अपने भावों को व्यक्त करने की ललक जब चरम पर पहुँच गई होगी तभी लोकमन से लोक–साहित्य अलग–अलग रूपों में स्वत : ही फूट पड़ा होगा। शुरू से ही मनुष्य प्रकृति के साथ रहा है इस लिए लोक–साहित्य का प्रस्फुटन प्रकृति की मनोहर, ममतामयी तथा आनन्ददायी गोद में ही हुआ होगा।

कई विद्वानों की राय है कि लोक–साहित्य अपढ़ लोगों के ज्ञान की अभिव्यक्ति है, लेकिन अपढ़ लोगों के ज्ञान की यह ज़मीन इतनी ज़रखेज़ साबित हुई है कि पढ़े लिखों का समूचा साहित्य तथा सभी कलाएँ इसी मिट्टी से फूट पड़ी हैं। इतना ही नहीं, यदि मानव–समाज अपनी मूलभूत एकता के बारे में तथा अपने अतीत के बारे में सही–सही जानकारी चाहता है तो उसे इसी अपढ़ों के ज्ञान का मंथन करना पड़ेगा। दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि अभी तक यह मंथन, विशेष कर कश्मीरी लोक साहित्य का किसी लोक साहित्य मर्मज्ञ विद्वान द्वारा समुचित रूप से नहीं हुआ है।

कहा जाता है कि मनुष्य का अतीत इतिहास के पन्नों पर दर्ज होता है अगर इस कथन के 'मनुष्य' का अतीत शब्द से अभिप्राय 'लोक' या 'जन' से है तो इस कथन को सही के खाने में क्या सही की परिधि के नज़दीक भी नहीं रखा जा सकता क्योंकि इतिहास में लोक या जन के अतीत का ज़िक्र तो क्या उसके होने तक का भी उल्लेख नहीं हुआ है। इतिहास के पन्नों पर राजे–महाराजे, सुल्तान–बादशाह, मंत्री–वज़ीर, सूबेदार–सरदार, जंग–लूटखसोट तथा सन्धियाँ–दग़ाबाज़िया इत्यादि ही दर्ज रही हैं। इतिहास की नज़र लोक की ओर

1. देखें अभिनव भारती, मा० 2, पृष्ठ : 213

कभी भूलकर भी नहीं गई है। अगर कहा जाए कि आज तक असली इतिहास लिखा ही नहीं गया तो इस बात को बिल्कुल सच माना जाना चाहिए। असली इतिहास याने लोक का इतिहास बड़े–बड़े विद्वानों तथा बड़े–बड़े पुस्तकालयों की अलमारियों में तालाबन्द नहीं है। यह बड़े–बड़े राजाओं–बादशाहों या तंगनज़र स्वार्थी राजनीतिज्ञों द्वारा तथाकथित इतिहासकारों की कलम की जुम्बिशें खरीद कर नहीं लिखवाया गया। असली इतिहास को किसी बिचौलिये की जरूरत नहीं। यह हर देश हर प्रान्त तथा हर क्षेत्र के लोक–साहित्य की ज़बान से बोलता है। ज़रूरत है श्रवणदोषरहित तथा अपने क़लम की पवित्रता को समझने वाले सही इतिहासकारों की। अगर आज तक ऐसा एक भी इतिहासकार मिल गया होता तो संसार भर के मानव समाज ने समझ लिया होता कि लोक–साहित्य बनावटीपन की कच्ची दीवारों को ढहा कर मानवीय मूल एकता को रेखांकित करता है। इन्होंने समझ लिया होता समस्त जन एक हैं और इनकी अनुभूतियाँ भी एक हैं।

ऊपर कहा जा चुका है कि लोक–साहित्य अपढ़जनों की भावनाओं की सहज अभिव्यक्ति है। अपढ़जनों की अभिव्यक्ति, याने लिपि से भी अनभिज्ञ व्यक्तियों की अभिव्यक्ति इसीलिए लिखित रूप में न आई। लिखित रूप में न होने के कारण यह अभिव्यक्ति याने लोक–साहित्य पीढ़ी से पीढ़ी तक मौखिक याने ज़बानी पहुँची हैं। ऐसा होने से इस साहित्य में कुछ छोटी मोटी तब्दीलियाँ भी अवश्य आई होंगी। इस साहित्य के मौखिक प्रसार में मर्दों की अपेक्षा महिलाओं जैसे दादी–नानी आदि ने काफी योगदान दिया है। लोक–गायकों तथा किस्सागोओं आदि के योगदान को भी नकारा नहीं जा सकता। यह ज़बानों से ज़बानों तक पहुँचने वाला साहित्य आधुनिकता के प्रभाव से हमारे बीच से विलुप्त होता जा रहा है अतः इसे शीघ्रातिशीघ्र लिपिबद्ध करके सुरक्षित रखने की सख़्त ज़रूरत है।

लोक़ साहित्य के मुख्य रूप से पाँच अंग माने गये हैं। ये पाँच अंग हैं :–
(क) लोक–कथाएँ (ख) पद्य–कथाएँ (ग) लोकगीत
(घ) कहावतें तथा (ड़) पहेलियाँ।

प्रस्तुत आलेख की सीमाओं को नज़र में रखते हुए लोक–साहित्य के लोक–कथा अंग पर ही सरसरी रूप से दृष्टिपात किया जायेगा।

लोक साहित्य में लोक–कथाओं का अपना एक खास स्थान है। इन कथाओं की ओर बच्चे, बूड़े समान रूप से आकृष्ट होते रहे हैं। इन कथाओं की ख़ासियत यह है कि ये तुरन्त प्रसार पाती हैं। सुनने वाले पर तुरन्त प्रभाव डालती हैं तथा

उसके स्मृति पटल पर बहुत देर तक बनी रहती हैं। इसी विशेषता के कारण लोक–कथाओं ने देशों की सीमाएँ पार कर अनेक देशों की लोक–कथाओं का मूल आधार बनने का काम किया है। इसी तथ्य को नज़र में रखते हुए फ्रांस के महान विद्वान एमानुएल क्वाइसकुइन ने कहा है कि पश्चिम की सभी लोक–कथाओं का नमूना भारत में था। इसी बात की तसदीक थ्योडोर बेनफे ने यह कह कर की है कि पश्चिम की लोक–कथाएँ भारत की लोक–कथाओं का परिणाम हैं! विश्व प्रसिद्ध अलिफ लैला की अनेक कथाओं का मूल रूप कथासरित्सागर में मिलता है।

ज्ञात स्रोतों के आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि भारतीय लोक–कथा साहित्य का प्राचीन संग्रह बृहद् कथा है। बृहद् कथा पैशाची भाषा में लिखी रचना थी जिसे कश्मीर नरेश अनन्त (प्रथम शताब्दी ईस्वीं) के सभा कवि सोमदेव ने कथासरितसागर नाम से संस्कृत में अनूदित किया था। कथासरितसागर में अनेक रोचक कथाएं संग्रहीत हैं जिन्हें बाईस हज़ार श्लोकों में ढाला गया है। डा॰ वेद कुमारी घई के मतानुसार पंचतन्त्र तथा वेतालपंचविशतिका इस विशाल ग्रंथ का भाग बन गये हैं। बौद्ध, जैन तथा पौराणिक कथाओं का बहुत बड़ी संख्या में इस ग्रंथ में समावेश हुआ है। अलिफ लैला की अनेक कहानियों का मूल रूप कथासरितसागर में मिलता हैं[1]।

प्राप्त सामग्री के आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि कश्मीर की लोक–कथाओं का पहला लिपिबद्ध संग्रह एक ईसाई पादरी जॉन हिन्टन नोवल्ज़ ने तैयार किया। इन कथाओं का अंग्रेज़ी अनुवाद फोल्क टेल्ज़ ऑफ कश्मीर के नाम से सन् १८८५ ई॰ में प्रकाशित किया गया। इस संग्रह में कश्मीर की चौंसठ लोक कथाएँ संग्रहीत हैं। इन लोक कथाओं को नोवेल्ज़ ने कई कश्मीरियों से प्राप्त किया है जिन के नाम और पते संग्रहकर्त्ता एवं अनुवादक ने पुस्तक की पाद–टिप्पणियों में दिये हैं। एक और ईसाई ने सन् १६१२ ई॰ में हातम नाम के एक कश्मीरी मुसलमान से, जो व्यवसाय से तेली था, पच्चीस कश्मीरी किस्से सुने। इन्हीं किस्सों को अंग्रेजी में अनूदित कर हातिम्स टेल्ज़ नाम दिया गया और इसी को सन् १६२३ ई॰ में ग्रिर्यसन ने सम्पादित कर प्रकाशित किया। स्पष्ट है कि कश्मीर की लोक कथाओं को पहली बार संग्रहीत करने तथा एक विदेशी भाषा में अनूदित करने का प्रशंसनीय काम विदेशियों ने ही किया। इसके बाद सन् 1948 में कश्मीर के एक विद्वान पण्ड़ित सोमनाथ धर ने कश्मीरी की कई लोक कथाओं का संग्रह एवं अंग्रेजी में अनुवाद किया। इस अनुवाद को कश्मीरी फोल्कटेल्ज़ नाम देकर हिन्द किताब्ज, बम्बई ने प्रकाशित किया। पण्ड़ित श्यामलाल साधु ने भी कई कश्मीरी लोक–कथाओं एवं किस्सों का अंग्रेजी अनुवाद

1. देखें –कश्मीर का संस्कृत साहित्य को योगदान : वेद कुमारी घई, पृष्ठ–11

किया जिसका प्रकाशन श्रीनगर (कश्मीर) के एक स्थानीय प्रकाशक कपूर ब्रदर्स ने फोल्क टेल्ज़ फ्रॉम कश्मीर नाम से किया।

स्वतन्त्रता पाने से पहले शायद किसी भी हिन्दी विद्वान ने कश्मीरी की लोक–कथाओं का हिन्दी अनुवाद हिन्दी जगत के सामने रखने का प्रयत्न नहीं किया। स्वतन्तत्रा प्राप्ति के बाद भी और कोई गम्भीर एवं ठोस काम आज तक नहीं हुआ है। छिटपुट प्रयासों में आत्माराम एण्ड संस, दिल्ली, द्वारा प्रकाशित पण्ड़ित नन्दलाल चत्ता का कश्मीरी लोक कहानियाँ नाम का एक छोटा सचित्र संग्रह बच्चों के लिए प्रकाशित किया गया। जम्मू–कश्मीर कलचरल अकादमी ने भी कश्मीरी लोक–कथाएँ नाम से कई कश्मीरी लोक–कथाओं का हिन्दी अनुवाद पण्ड़ित शशिखेखर तोषखानी, पण्ड़ित मोहन निराश तथा श्रीमती जया धर से करवा कर प्रकाशित किया। इस संग्रह का सम्पादन श्री श्यामलाल शर्मा ने किया है। इसके बाद कश्मीरी लोक–कथाओं का कोई उल्लेखनीय हिन्दी अनुवाद नज़र नहीं आता। सुना है कि दिल्ली में यात्री प्रकाशन से कश्मीर की लोक–कथाओं का हिन्दी अनुवाद निकट भविष्य में ही हिन्दी पाठकों के समक्ष प्रस्तुत होने वाला है।

कश्मीर की अनेक लोक–कथाओं को अपने मूल कश्मीरी रूप में लिपिबद्ध कराने तथा इन्हें प्रकाशित करने का श्रेय श्रीनगर (कश्मीर) के एक स्थानीय प्रकाशक गुलाम मुहम्मद–नूर मुहम्मद को जाता है जिन्होंने इन कथाओं को कई छोटी–छोटी पुस्तिकाओं का रूप दे कर फारसी लिपि में प्रकाशित किया। इस दिशा में सर्वाधिक गम्भीर एवं प्रशंसनीय काम जम्मू–कश्मीर कलचरल अकादमी ने किया है। इस संस्था ने विभिन्न लेखकों एवं संग्रहकर्त्ताओं का सहयोग प्राप्त कर 'काऽशिरि'लूकुंकऽथुं (कश्मीर लोक कथाएँ) नाम से कश्मीरी लोक कथाओं के कई संग्रह प्रकाशित किये हैं।

लोक–कथा साहित्य एक ऐसा आईना है जो दुनिया के अलग–अलग इलाकों की संस्कृतियों, परम्पराओं तथा सोचों आदि का एक साफ और स्पष्ट प्रतिबिम्ब प्रस्तुत करता है। कश्मीरी लोक–कथा साहित्य इसका अपवाद न हो कर कश्मीरी संस्कृति, कश्मीरी परम्परा एवं कश्मीरी लोकमानस की सही–सही व सच्ची तसवीर पेश करता है। कश्मीरी लोक कथा साहित्य के अध्ययन से इस बात का आसानी से पता चलता है कि कश्मीरी लोकमानस आध्यात्मिक चेतना से लबरेज़ रहा है। यह इसी चेतना का परिणाम है कि प्राचीन काल से ही यहाँ के जन का अध्यात्म की ओर अत्यधिक झुकाव रहा है तथा यहाँ के अनेक संत–महात्मा अध्यात्म के शिखर तक पहुँचने में सफल रहे हैं। साधु संतों एवं पीरों–फकीरों की बात तो कुछ और

है पर यहाँ के साधारण गृहस्थ एवं भूजीवी किसान भी आध्यात्मिक क्षेत्र में किसी से पीछे नहीं रहे हैं। कश्मीर की एक लोक कथा वाग्भट्ट शीर्षक से प्रचलित है। इस कथा का मुख्य पात्र वाग्भट्ट एक साधारण एवं गरीब कश्मीरी पण्डित किसान है जो कश्मीर के एक गाँव में अपने परिवार के साथ एक फूस की झोंपड़ी में रहते हैं। चिलचिलाती धूप में अपने खेत में कठोर श्रम करने से इनका शरीर काला पड़ गया है। ये अपने शरीर की साफ–सफ़ाई का भी ध्यान नही रखते ओर इनका बाहरी व्यक्तित्व भी प्रभावशाली नहीं। पर यह साधारण किसान अध्यात्म की ऊँचाइयों को भी पार कर चुका है। इस बात को लोक–कथा में वर्णित कई घटनाएँ रेखांकित करती हैं। महाभारत युद्ध के बाद जब पाण्डव अश्वमेध यज्ञ रचाने का फैसला करते हैं तो भगवान कृष्ण वाग्भट्ट को ही प्रमुख पंड़ित के रूप में चयन करते हैं। वाग्भट्ट को निमन्त्रित करने के लिए भीम को भेजा जाता है। भीम हस्तिनापुर से कश्मीर आकर वाग्भट की खोज करते हैं और उन्हें एक गाँव में खेत में हल चलाते हुए पाते हैं। भीम थोड़ी दूर पर एक पेड़ की छाया में वाग्भट्ट की प्रतीक्षा करते हैं। इसी बीच वाग्भट्ट की पत्नी अपने पति के लिए खाना ले कर आती है। वाग्भट्ट हल–बैलों को यथास्थिति छोड़ कर खाना खाने पेड़ की छाया में आते हैं जहाँ भीम और वाग्भट्ट की पत्नी उसकी प्रतीक्षा में होते है। भीम का अभिवादन स्वीकार कर वाग्भट्ट भीम से आने का कारण पूछते हैं। वाग्भट्ट के कुचैले शरीर तथा अनाकर्षक व्यक्तित्व से भीम तनिक भी प्रभावित नहीं होते। उनके मन में शंका उत्पन्न होती है कि यह मैला, आकर्षण शून्य अपढ़ लगने वाला ब्राह्मण अश्वमेध यज्ञ का प्रमुख पण्ड़ित बनने के योग्य है क्या ? भगवान कृष्ण ने मुझे इन्हें बुलाने क्यों भेजा, जबकि हस्तिनापुर में एक से एक धुरन्धर पठित और विद्वान पण्ड़ित हैं। मुझे तो इस व्यक्ति में कोई भी विशेषता नज़र नहीं आती। इन्ही विचारों में डूबे भीम की नज़र हल–बैलों पर पड़ी। उन्होंने देखा कि हल की मूठ पर एक कौआ बैठा है जो कॉव–कॉव की आवाज़ लगा बैलों को चला रहा है। ये देख कर वे सब समझ गये और वाग्भट्ट को मन ही मन प्रणाम किया। जब वाग्भट्ट भीम के साथ हस्तिनापुर पहुँचें तो स्वयं भगवान कृष्ण अन्य लोगों के साथ करबद्ध हो उनकी अगवानी में खड़े थे। हस्तिनापुर के पण्ड़ितों ने वाग्भट्ट को उपेक्षा भरी नज़रों से देखा, मुंह बनाया और व्यंग्य बाणों की बौछार करते रहे। यज्ञ की अग्नि प्रज्ज्वलित करने के लिए जब वाग्भट्ट ने अंगारे लाने को कहा तो हस्तिनापुर के पण्ड़ितों ने उन्हें नीचा दिखाने के लिए व्यंग्य भरी वाणी में कहा कि पण्डित जी महाराज आपको अंगारों की क्या आवश्यकता आप अपनी आध्यात्मिक शक्ति एवं मंत्र बल से अग्नि को प्रज्ज्वलित कीजिए। इन पण्ड़ितों के व्यंग्य वचनों से वाग्भट्ट काफी आहत हुए पर भगवान श्री कृष्ण ने उनसे अनुनय–विनय कर शान्त कर दिया। इसके बाद वाग्भट्ट ने अपनी आध्यात्मिक शक्ति एवं मंत्रबल से अग्नि को प्रकट किया तथा

अंगुली के इशारों से यज्ञशाला की चारों दीवारों से पावन वेद ऋचाओं की ध्वनि सृजित करने में सफल रहे।

स्पष्ट है कि इस कथा की रचना तभी संभव हुई है जब लोक मानस में आध्यात्मिक चेतना प्रबलतम रही होगी। इस कथा से यह इशारा भी मिल रहा है कि कश्मीरी पण्ड़ित देश भर में आध्यात्मिक शक्तिसंपन्न माने जाते रहे हैं तथा इन्होंने अपनी इस साख को बनाये रखा है।

अध्यात्म के रास्ते पर चलने वाले राही को अपनी मंजिल तक पहुँचने के लिए दृढ़ विश्वास के संबल को साथ ले कर चलने की बहुत ज़रूरत होती है। इस तथ्य को रेखांकित करती व्यशवास (विश्वास) नाम की एक लोक कथा लोक में प्रचलित है :—

एक, बहुत ही गरीब, कश्मीरी पण्ड़ित मज़दूरी करके अपने परिवार को पाल रहा था। जिस दिन मज़दूरी मिलती उस रात वह और उसका परिवार आधा पेट भोजन करने में समर्थ होता और जिस दिन मज़दूरी न मिलती उस रोज पूरा परिवार खाली पेट रातभर करवटें बदलता रहता। पण्डित ने पढ़ा था कि ईश्वर जिसे जन्म देते है उसके खाने—पीने का प्रबन्ध भी करते है। पण्डित को इस बात पर पक्का विश्वास था। एक समय ऐसा आया कि पण्ड़ित को लगातार कई दिनों तक मज़दूरी नहीं मिली अत : कई दिनों तक घर में चूल्हा नहीं जला। बच्चे मारे भूख के बिलखने लगे तथा भोजन के अभाव में अधमरे हो गये। एक सुबह पण्ड़ित घर से इस आशा से चल पड़ा कि आज अवश्य कोई न कोई उसे मज़दूरी के लिए रखेगा। पर दुर्भाग्य, ऐसा कुछ न हुआ। रात को जब उसकी पत्नी ने उसे खाली हाथ आते देखा तो वह अनायास रो पड़ी। पति—पत्नी ने बच्चों को सुलाने की कोशिश की, पर वे खाली पेट कैसे सोते। अब पण्ड़ित से बच्चों की हालत न देखी गई। वह उठा और पुस्तक खोल कर वह पन्ना निकाला जिस पर लिखा था कि ईश्वर जिसे जन्म देते हैं उसके खाने—पीने का भी प्रबन्ध करते हैं। पण्ड़ित ने अपनी कलम को दवात में डुबोया और इस पूरी पंक्ति को बड़े गुस्से के साथ काट डाला। सुबह वह फिर डगमगाते कदमों से मज़दूरी ढूंढ़ने निकल पडा। इस दिन भी उसे कुछ न मिला। वह रात को देर से घर लौटा। दबे पांव तथा धड़कते हृदय से उसने घर के आंगन में कदम रखा। घर के मुख्य द्वार पर उसकी पत्नी प्रसन्नमुद्रा में उस के स्वागत के लिए खड़ी थी। घर से बच्चों के रोने—कर्राहने की आवाज़ भी नही आ रही थी। वह हैरान हुआ। पत्नी से इस कायापलट के बारे में पूछने पर उसे मालूम हुआ कि उसके घर से जाने के बाद एक व्यक्ति घोड़े की लगाम थामे उनके आंगन

में प्रविष्ट हुआ तथा घोड़े पर लदे भार को उनके एक कमरे में खाली किया। यह बहुत सारा धन था। उस व्यक्ति से पूछने पर मालूम हुआ कि वह पण्डित का परम मित्र है और उसने बहुत समय पहले अपने पण्डित मित्र से कर्ज़ा लिया था वह आज तक लौटा न सका था। उसने कहा कि कल रात पण्ड़ित बहुत गुस्से में मेरे पास आया और कर्जा न चुका पाने पर मेरी जीभ काट डाली। उसने अपनी जीभ भी दिखाई जिससे उस समय भी काफी खून बह रहा था। पण्डित आन की आन में सब कुछ समझ गया और फौरन घर से निकल पड़ा। फिर वह कभी लौट कर नहीं आया।

यह कथा भी लोकमानस की आध्यात्मिक चेतना को रेखांकित करते हुए इस बात को बहुत ही शिद्दत के साथ दर्ज करती है कि भगवान पर अटूट विश्वास तथा मन में पूर्ण समर्पण की भावना हो तो भगवान स्वंय भक्त का हित करने के लिए दौड़े आते हैं।

एक और लोक कथा है 'मऽनराज़स माऽशकन' (भैंस के कानों वाला राजा)। यह कथा एक जवान राजा की है जो शिकार के पीछे भागते हुए एक घने जंगल में पहुँचा और अपना रास्ता भूल गया। रात को उसे दूर कहीं से प्रकाश दिखाई दिया। वह इस प्रकाश की और बढ़ा और एक कुटिया में दिये को बलते हुए पाया। राजा ने कुटिया का द्वार खटखटाया तो एक अप्सरा सी सुन्दर युवती ने किवाड़ खोले। राजा ने अपने आने का कारण बता कर रात भर कुटिया में पड़े रहने की याचना की। युवती ने जवाब में कहा कि उसके पति तीर्थ–यात्रा पर हैं, वह कुटिया में अकेली है इस कारण उसे कमरे में रात भर के लिए जगह देने में असमर्थ है। हाँ, वह उसे सोने के लिए कुटिया का बरामदा दे सकती है। राजा बरामदे में ठहरा। युवती ने उसके लिए भोजन बनाया और श्रद्धापूर्वक उसे भोजन कराया। विश्राम का समय होने पर युवती ने कमरे की खिड़कियों एवं द्वार पर सांकलें चढ़ा दी और सो गई। राजा भी युवती द्वारा दिये गये बिस्तरे में लेट गया। कुछ समय बीत जाने पर युवा राजा के मन को कुवासना ने बुरी तरह से घेरा। वह उठा। द्वार तथा खिड़कियाँ बन्द होने के कारण वह हौले से कुटिया के छत पर चढ़ा। कुछ फट्टियाँ उखाड़ दी और धम्म से युवती के कमरे में छलांग लगा दी। आवाज़ सुन युवती घबरा कर उठ खड़ी हुई। ज्योंही कुवासना ग्रस्त राजा युवती की ओर बढ़ा उसके इर्द–गिर्द आग की लपटें प्रकट हुईं। युवती ने शाप से इस पाशविक कृत्य के कारण राजा का चेहरा पशुचेहरे में बदल गया और उसके कान भैस के कानों में परिवर्तित हुए। बहुत समय तक राजा अपनी प्रजा से जंगलों में छिपता रहा। अंत में वह एक तीर्थ में गया वहाँ उसे वही कुटिया वाली महिला मिली। राजा ने महिला से क्षमा याचना की। महिला ने उसे माफ कर दिया। इसके बाद उसने तीर्थ के पवित्र ज़ल में डुबकी लगाई जिससे

उसका चेहरा एवं कान पहले जैसे हो गये।

यह कथा लोकमानस में की आध्यात्मिक चेतना से रू–ब–रू कराने के अतिरिक्त कठोर साधना द्वारा साधकों की अर्जित शाक्ति की ओर इंगित करते हुए उनके असाधारण रूप से क्षमाशील होने की ओर भी इंगित करती है।

अध्यात्म के रास्ते पर चलने वाले व्यक्ति, सम्प्रदाय तथा जाति आदि का फर्क किये बगैर अपनी शक्ति द्वारा लोगो का उपकार करते हैं। यह बात जूग्य तुॅ ग्रूस (जोगी और किसान) नाम की लोक–कथा स्पष्ट करती है। एक गरीब मुसलमान किसान अपने एकमात्र छोटे से खेत में काम कर रहा था कि उसे अपनी ओर एक जोगी आता दिखाई दिया। जोगी के पास पहुँचने पर किसान ने उसे चिलम पीने को दी और कहा कि मैं बहुत गरीब हूँ। चिलम में तम्बाकू भरने से पहले किसान ने चिलम को छेद ढकने के लिए अपने खेत से पाया पुराने समय का एक ताम्बे का सिक्का डाला। जोगी ने चिलम ले कर कश लगाये और चिलम किसान को थमा कर अपने रास्ते पर चल पड़ा। किसान ने जब चिलम उल्टी तो पाया कि ताम्बे का सिक्का सोने में बदल चुका है।

प्रार्थना में ज़बरदस्त ताकत होती है इसकी तसदीक ज़ोहरा खोतन तुॅ हयाबन्द (ज़ोहरा खातून और हयाबन्द) नाम की लोक–कथा करती है। जब ज़ोहरा खातून मिट्टी का एक महिला सिर बनाती है और खुदा से प्रार्थना करती है तो सिर के निचले हिस्से से ताज़ा खून टपकने लगता है।

देवी–देवताओं के प्रति अनास्था मनुष्य के लिए बहुत महंगी पड़ती है तथा इनके प्रति आस्था–विश्वास अनेक कष्टों एवं मुसीबतों से छुटकारा दिलाता है इसकी ओर पनुॅ कथ (पन कथा), पीर बहोदुरॅन्य च़्वोट (पीर बहादुर की रोटी) तथा अन्य लोक–कथाएँ स्पष्टरूप से इंगित करती हैं।

अध्यात्म के क्षेत्र में चमत्कार का भी एक ख़ास स्थान रहा है। कश्मीरी लोक–कथा साहित्य में स्थान–स्थान पर तरह–तरह के चमत्कारो का वर्णन है। यदि कहा जाए कि कश्मीर की हर लोक–कथा में किसी न किसी रूप में चमत्कार का ज़िक्र है तो बेजा न होगा। मिसाल के तौर पर यहाँ दो–एक लोक–कथाओं की और ध्यान दिलाना पर्याप्त होगा। कश्मीरी लोक–कथाओं में स्वो'न्य किसुॅर, हियमाल नाऽग्यराय (हियमाल और नागराज) तथा सऽतिमकूर (सातवीं राजकुमारी) आदि लोक–कथाएँ इस विचार की पुष्टि में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती हैं। स्वोन्य किसुर की स्वोन्य किसुॅर जब घरवालों से रूठ कर जंगल में चली जाती है तो एक दरवेश उसे सात बीज के दाने देता है जिनके बीजते ही सात वृक्ष उग आते हैं। हियमाल–नाऽग्यराय के राजा तथा हियमाल के भस्म हुए शरीरों को एक कुण्ड़ के

जल के प्रभाव से पुनः जीवित किया जाता है। सऽतिम कूर की सातवीं राजकुमारी जब चलती है तो उसके बायें पैर के नीचे चाँदी तथा दाहिने पैर के नीचे से सोने की ईंटें पैदा होती है।

जिस प्रकार अध्यात्म अनैतिकता का घोर शत्रु तथा नैतिकता का पक्षधर है उसी प्रकार लोक–साहित्य भी अनैतिकता का घोर विरोध एवं नैतिकता की सदा पुष्टि करता रहा है। कश्मीरी लोक–कथा साहित्य से इसे हज़ारों उदाहरणों द्वारा सिद्ध किया जा सकता है।

कर्म और धर्म दोनों की महत्ता को प्रतिपादित करने वाली एक सुन्दर लोक कथा करूॅम तऽ दुरूॅम (कर्म और धर्म) है। यह लोक–कथा लोकमानस की गहरी एवं दृढ़ धारणाओं को रेखांकित करते हुए लोक कथाकार की पैनी दृष्टि की ओर भी ध्यान खींचती है।

मेरे विचार में यदि कश्मीरी लोकमानस में विद्यमान आध्यात्मिक चेतना की खोज करनी हो तो कश्मीरी लोक–कथा साहित्य का बहुत ही गम्भीरता के साथ अध्ययन किया जाना चाहिए।

सन्दर्भ संकेत :

1. फोल्क टेल्ज़ ऑफ कश्मीर : जॉन हिल्टन नोवेल्ज़
2. हातिम्ज़ टेल्ज़ : ग्रियर्सन
3. कश्मीरी फोल्क टेल्ज़ : प्रो॰ सोमनाथ धर
4. फोल्क टेल्ज़ फ्रॉज कश्मीर : प्रो॰ श्याम लाल साधु
5. कश्मीर का संस्कृत साहित्य को योगदान : डॉ॰ वेद कुमारी घई
6. कश्मीरी साहित्य का इतिहास : डॉ॰ शशि शेखर तोषखानी
7. कश्मीरी लोक–कथाएँ : श्री श्याल लाल शर्मा
8. काऽशिरि लूकुँ कऽथुँ (भाग 1, 2, 3, 4 तथा 5) : प्रकाशक – जम्मू कश्मीर कलचरल अकादमी
9. कीज़ टु कश्मीर : ज़ुत्शी
10. कश्मीरियत : संस्कृति के ताने बाने : प्रकाशक – यात्री प्रकाशन, बी १३ए सादतपुर, दिल्ली–94.

भारतीय ऋषि परम्परा और कश्मीर

–अर्जुन देव 'मजबूर'

महाकवि कालिदास ने कहा है :

अस्तियुत्तरस्यां दिशि देवात्मा
हिमालयो नाम नगाधिराज :।
पूर्वापरो तोयनिधीवगाह्य
स्थितः पृथिव्या इव मानदण्ड :।।

इस श्लोक की अन्तिम पंक्ति पर विचार करने से कवि का आशय स्पष्ट होता है कि हिमालय की गोद में पनपी भारत की संस्कृति पूर्व और पश्चिम को मानदण्ड के समान संतुलित किए हुए है। प्रोफेसर फ़्रैंकफर्ट ने अपनी पुस्तक New Light on the most Ancient East में कहा है कि भारतीय संस्कृति यूनान से पूर्व की है। आज ग्रीक, बैबिलोनिया, असीरिया तथा मिस्र की सभ्यताँए समय के अथाह गर्त में खो गई हैं किन्तु पूरे पश्चिम के विचारकों और कवियों की दृष्टि भारत की प्राचीन सभ्यता की ओर लगी है। अशांत विश्व में यदि कही शान्ति की झलक दिख रही है तो वह भारत है। देखना यह है भारतीय संस्कृति में ऐसा क्या था जो इसे आज तक बचाए हुए है।

वैदिक युग की देन, विश्वसाहित्य में सबसे प्राचीन, "वेद", शब्द से ही हमारी सभ्यता की भित्ति का पता चल जाता है। वेद 'विद्' धातु से बना शब्द है जिसका अर्थ विचार करना तथा ज्ञान अर्जन करना है। वेद शब्द का लेटिन (Latin) अर्थ है Video अर्थात दर्शन करना। मन्त्र शब्द "मन्यते विचार्यते" मनन और विचार करने के अर्थों को ही प्रकट करता है। मन्त्र का अर्थ गुप्त कथन भी है।

स्पष्ट है कि हमारी सभ्यता की आधारभूमि चितंन है। विचार की प्रमुखता ही हमें सत्य और प्रकाश की ओर लेकर सुख और शान्ति से एकाकार कराती है। यह बात सर्वमान्य है कि वेद मन्त्रों के द्रष्टा ऋषि ही थे। ऋषि शब्द ऋष् धातु से बना है जिसका अर्थ है गति, श्रुति, सत्य और तप। इसीलिए रज, तम रहित, तपोज्ञानयुक्त त्रिकालज्ञ, अमल, ज्ञान संपन्न, आप्त, शिष्ट तथा परज्ञानी मनुष्य को ऋषि कहा गया है। हमारी संस्कृति के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों को इन ही ऋषियों मुनियों, महर्षियों और आचार्यों ने महान तप, सत्यान्वेषण और अन्तः ज्ञान से परिवर्धित किया है।

मन्त्र द्रष्टा ऋषियों के अलग अलग सम्प्रदायों में महर्षि–ऋषि तथा ऋषिपुत्र और ऋषिकाओं की संख्या कई सौ तक जाती है। ऋषियों में उशना, बृहस्पति, कश्यप, च्यवन, उत्तथ्य, वामदेव, अगस्त्य, उशिक्, कदर्म, विश्रवा, शक्ति तथा अवर्त के नाम आते हैं। ऋषियों की संख्या उत्तरोतर बढ़ती ही गई अतः यहां इन सब का वर्णन नहीं हो सकता।

वेदों के पश्चात् संहिताओं, ब्राह्मण ग्रन्थों, आरण्यकों और फिर उपनिषदों की रचना भी श्रद्धा, साधना, तप और ज्ञान से परिपूर्ण ऋषियों द्वारा ही हुई। ब्राह्मण ग्रन्थों के अनुसार महर्षि विश्वामित्र वेद मन्त्रों के प्रथम द्रष्टा और वामदेव प्रथम व्याख्याता थे। हमारे दर्शनकारों में पातंजलि जैसे योगवेता और सांख्य जैसे विश्ववेत्ता ऋषि और दार्शनिक आते हैं। हमारे आरण्यक सांसारिकबंधनों और जन कोलाहल से दूर रमणीय अरण्यों में रचे गए। भारतीय ज्ञान और विचार धारा के दीप्तपुंज उपनिषदों में प्राचीनतम चिंतन का ऐतिहासिक विवरण समन्वित हुआ है। इन पर पाश्चात्य दार्शनिक और विद्वान मुग्ध हैं। इसी प्रकार पुराणों के रचनाकार भी ऋषि ही थे। रामायण के रचयिता वाल्मीकि को भी महामुनि की पदवी दी गई है।

वाचस्पति गैरोला के अनुसार माहभारत में भी ऋषि परम्परा कवि सुलभ भवनाओं को अभिव्यक्त करने में परिणत हुई। अन्य शास्त्रों तथा व्याकरण, ज्योतिष, गणित आदि में भी ऋषियों ने अपना योगदान दिया। महामुनि पाणिनि ने अष्टाध्यायी के प्रथम सूत्र में ही व्याकरण की भव्य अट्टालिका के प्रत्येक भाग की कल्पना की थी। ऐसा सूत्र बद्ध व्याकरण आज संसार भर में नहीं मिलता। पाणिनी के काम की स्थापना में प्राच्यविदों ने दर्जनों ग्रन्थ लिख डाले हैं। यही ऋषि परम्परा हमें बौध–साहित्य में भी दृष्टिगोचर होती है।

बौधाचार्य नागार्जुन, जिन्हें कुछ विद्वान शुपैयां कश्मीर के पास सुप्रसामन में कुछ वर्ष बिताने की बात कहते हैं, ने शून्यवाद की कल्पना की। शताब्दियों पूर्व के इसी सिद्धान्त की तरह आज के वैज्ञानिक ब्रह्मांड के विकास की बात करते है।

इसी महान भारतीय परम्परा के सम्बन्ध में श्री रामानंद तिवारी कहते हैं :–

मैं एक वर्ण उस चिर जीवन के स्वर का
जो गूंज रहा अज्ञात अनन्त गगन में
रसराग अपूर्व, अलक्षित बन अन्तर का
प्रतिध्वनित कभी जो होता तनमय क्षण में।

भारत की तरह कश्मीर के इन्द्रधनुषी परिवेश ने सदा ही ऋषियों और संतों को आकर्षित किया है। कश्मीर की स्थापना और नामकरण कश्यप ऋषि के नाम पर ही तो हुआ है। शारदापीठ कश्मीर के नीलमत पुराणकार कहते हैः–

पृथिव्यां यानि तीर्थानि तानि तत्र नराधिप
ऋष्याश्रम सुसंबाध शीतातप, सुखं शुभम्

अर्थात् : हे राजन! पृथ्वी के सभी तीर्थ वहां मौजूद हैं। ऋषि आश्रमों से परिपूर्ण यह भूमि शीत और ग्रीष्म में मनहर व मंगलकारी है। कश्मीर ने इस ऋषि परम्परा को संवर्धित किया और आगे बढ़ाया। डॉ॰ रघुनाथ सिंह के अनुसार ललितादित्य के ज़माने तक यहां कोई तीन सौ बड़े तीर्थस्थल विद्यमान थे। कश्मीरी पंड़ितों द्वारा आश्रमों को प्राचीन व्यवस्था को आज तक चलाया जा रहा है।

कश्मीर के प्रख्यात कवियों में परम योगिनी लल्लेश्वरी और नुन्द ऋषि आदि कई ऐसे नाम आते हैं जिन्होंने घर भार छोड़ कर तपस्या और साधना द्वारा 'सत्य' को पा लिया। नुन्द ऋषि ने सूखी 'हंद' दूध और जलाहार से १२ वर्ष का लम्बा समय एक कन्धरा में व्यतीत किया वे सारी जिंदगी शाकाहारी रहे। बाबा खलील के ऋषिनामे के अनुसार उन्होंने श्रुकों अर्थात् श्लोकों के अतिरिक "बोध–चरित" शीर्षक से दो हज़ार पांच सो श्लोकों की लम्बी कविता लिखी। वे गाँव–गाँव जाकर सद्जीवन व्यतीत करने का उपदेश देते रहे। सम्भवतः इसी कारण उन्हें 'विश्व–गुरू' का पदवी प्राप्त हुई। उनके श्रुकों में ऋषियों का ज़िक्र देखिएः–

डंडक वन के जलक ऋषि ने
तृण खा कर निर्वाह किया
अन्न न खाया, बंधन तोड़ा
तुष्ट होंगे कब बंदों पर ईश।

प्राणाभ्यासी ऋषि पलास ने
पेड सफेदा चाटा दिन भर
छण भर भी ईश्वर न भुलाया
तुष्ट होंगे कब बंदों पर ईश।

उस महान लोभव्थ ऋषि ने
पाया स्वर्ग में मुक्ति–धाम

शोभित उनकी लीरें तक भी
तुष्ट होंगे कब बंदों पर ईश।

वह महान मीरान ऋषि
अपने ही जीवन से जूझा
जल की बूंदें पी कर के
तुष्ट होंगे कब बंदों पर ईश।

योगिक क्रिया के बारे में उन का एक श्रुक देखिएः–

मन का तुरगं न भागे, इसकी बाग सम्भालो
वश में करो, उडा जा रहा प्राण पवन
शीर्ष से शशिकला पिघल बहेगी
शिव औ' शून्य यूं होंगे एक

इसी ऋषि परम्परा को कश्मीर के कई सूफी कवियों ने अपनी असीम श्रद्धा और काव्य रचना से जीवित रखा। समय अभाव के कारण मैं केवल शमस फ़कीर के योग–परिदृश्य सम्बन्धी दो उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करता हूँ :–

आग में जलते दिखे पहाड़
जल दिखा काला सियाह
हरी घास एक जाल समान
मेरे मित्र मैं भिड़ा उसी में

तथा

तमस में तोड़ अज्ञान शिला
रत्न अमूल्य छीन नाग से
जला दीप में अपना रक्त
खा गया मैं, अपना ही मास

महामना, जीवन्मुक्त, महान संत भगवान गोपीनाथ इसी परम्परा के प्रकाशमान तारक हैं। उन्हें देखने मात्र से एक सन्तोष, एक शान्ति मन में व्याप्त होती थी। उनकी जन्म शताब्दी पर मैं प्रस्तुत करना चाहूँगा कि उनकी पुण्य स्मृति में हिमाँचल के किसी वन्य क्षेत्र में एक ऐसे आश्रम की स्थापना की जाए जो भारतीय ऋषि परम्परा की सशक्त थाती और विचारधारा को विद्वानों, संतों और उनके

प्रिय भक्तों द्वारा संसार में प्रचारित करे। क्योंकि विचार शक्ति से ही संसार भर में शान्ति गंगा बहाई जा सकती है।

अन्त में, मैं भगवान गोपीनाथ ट्रस्ट का आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ कि जिन के प्रयासों से आज की विचार गोष्टि का आयोजन हुआ।

पुस्तक सन्दर्भ :

1. शेखुल आलम : संकलन मोती लाल साक़ी (कलचर अकादमी० श्रीनगर द्वारा प्रकाशित)
2. वैद्धिक साहित्य (अध्याय) : (संस्कृत साहित्य का इतिहास) वाचस्पति गैरोला कृत, वाराणसी
3. पार्वती (महाकाव्य) : रामानन्द तिवारी कृत
4. नुन्द ऋषि : अनुवाद (हिन्दी) (शशि शेखर तोषखानी, डा० आर० एल० शांत, शम्भु नाथ भट्ट, हलीम, मोहन निराश, तथा अर्जुन देव मजबूर)
5. Panini : Theodor Gold Stucker
6. History of Vedic Literature : Max Muller
7. कुमार सम्भव : कालिदास कृत
8. हिन्दूमत और रीशियत (ऋषि परम्परा) : लेख – अर्जुन देव मजबूर (कश्मीरी शीराज़ा)
9. नीलमत पुराण : डा० वेद कुमारी घई कृत।

THE *VEDANTA* PHILOSOPHY AS EXPOUNDED IN THE *PANCADASI*

—Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal'

ॐ यस्मिन्विश्वं भाति खे नीलतावत्
श्रोतव्यो यस्तत्त्वमस्यादि वाक्यैः।

ज्ञाता ज्ञानाद्यस्य पूर्णत्वमेति
शुद्धं बुद्धं शंकरोऽस्मीति नौमि।।

We repeat *aum* for the auspicious beginning.

In whom the whole universe appears
like the blue of the sky,

Who is to be understood with the help of
the great sentences—Thou Art That etc;

By knowing whom the knower becomes
quite satisfied,

Who is all purity, all wisdom,
on realization— 'I Am Sankara;

To Him I make obeisance.

This verse of salutation to Almighty God is from the *Mangalacarana* to the Sanskrit commentary of Adi Sankaracarya's famous hymn—*UPADESA-PANCAKAM*, written by *Pandit Nidankak* in whose name there still exists the lane Kocha Nidhan at Motiyar in Rainawari, Srinagar, Kashmir. Therein he gives the essence of *Advaita Vedanta*.

I shall read out three verses to bow down to the Divine Preceptor. One is my own piece and the other two are from the *Guru Gita* based on the *Skanda Purana*. All the sanskrit verses quoted in this paper are immediatley followed by my English translation:

या काचिद्वै क्वचिदपि दशा किञ्चिदभ्यासपूरादानन्दाख्या भवभयहरा स्यात्सुभक्तस्य सद्यः।
सिद्धिस्सैषा सुरपितृनृणां यस्य भक्तया भवेन्नु तं स्वात्मानं विभववपुषं नीलकण्ठं प्रपद्ये।।

That indescribable supreme state which is revealed in a spontaneous moment (of grace) regardless of time or place to an earnest devotee, while he has remained absorbed continuously in spiritual practice for an unknown period, confers supreme joy (*ananda*) that wipes off all doubt and fear whatsoever. That is verily the true accomplishment for celestials, for manes and for human beings.

By whose grace this happens, to That Great Preceptor *Nilakantha*, who is my own self, this prostration is made.

यस्य स्मरणमात्रेण ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते स्वयम् ।
स एव सर्वसम्पत्तिः तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः।। (I—55)

By whose mere remembrance knowledge of Self is revealed spontaneously, He is the great blessing.

To that auspicious Guru this prostration.

अनेकजन्मसंप्राप्त कर्मेन्धन विदाहिने ।
आत्मज्ञानाग्निदानेन तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः।। (II—75)

We bow down to that great *Guru* who, by endowing one with the fire of the knowledge of Self, burns the whole lot of fuel of actions *(Karmas)* accumulated through past lives.

The *Pancadasi* of Sri Vidyaranya Swami is a post-Sankara *Advaita Vedanta* classic of great fame. It is a comprehensive manual to teach the supreme truth to those whose hearts are purified through the worship of the lotus feet of the *Guru* : 'तत्पादाम्बुरुहद्वन्द्वसेवानिर्मलचेतसाम्' (I—2). This book seems to have been introduced in Kashmir late during the nineteenth century by erudite Vedantic Mahatma, Pandit Sonakak Razdan, who lived near Raghunath Mandir, on the left bank of the *Vitasta* (Jhelum) between Habbakadal and Fatehkadal in Srinagar (Kashmir). Among the persons (both householders and *sanyasis*) whom he taught *Pancadasi,* Pandit Anand Kaul of Bana Mohalla, Srinagar was very inquisitive. He had grasped the text so well that he excelled in discussion on any topic of *Advaita Vedanta*. His worthy son and devoted disciple, Tikalal Kaul

'Achkan', who had learnt the *Pancadasi* from him, later brought out *Pancadasi Sar*, a concise edition of selected verses (320/1571) from the book with his almost literal Hindi translation giving Hindi equivalents of each word and the commentary. In its introduction he gives a brief-life sketch of the saint-scholar, popularly known as Anand Kaul 'Pancadasi'.

Before giving my exposition of the *Pancadasi* it is necessary to give the background of the *Vedanta* Philosophy first. Literal meaning of the term *Vedanta* is 'the ending parts of the *Vedas*'. It is in *Vedanta* that we find the quintessence of the *Vedas* which are a store-house of the knowledge of eternal truth. By 'Veda' is meant the scripture that is not composed but is eternal, revealed only to the *Risis* in the days of yore. It is also known as 'Sruti'—'What is heard'.

Generally the purpose of *Avatars* is the re-establishment of *Dharma* through and by means of destruction of the wicked and protection of the righteous. Such *Avatars* take birth in each *yuga* (age) according to the needs of humanity. Yet there are also a special kind of Avatars, described in our scriptures, who appear on this earth after the commencement of each yuga, not for the destruction of evil doers but for giving scriptural, psychic and ethical illumination to human beings and setting before them the path which takes them to their goal of eternal happiness.

Daksinamurti is the first *Jnana* Guru of *Satyayuga*, the golden age. Sanaka and other disciples merely go and sit before Him as good reflectors while the Guru, sitting in utter silence before them, imparts spiritual knowledge:

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्ते छिन्नसंशयाः। (Daksinamurti Stotra)

Dattatreya is the *Adi* Jagad Guru of the *Treta Yuga*, the silver age. The seeker here is to be disciplined, taught and trained to receive the knowledge by following the path of *Swadharma* (one's own spiritual creed). This purifies his mind, which is the pre-requisite qualification for *Jnana* (knowledge). Then the disciple can receive, digest, absorb and finally assimilate the teachings obtained from the Master.

Next follows *Dwapara Yuga*, the age of bronze. It is the

age of doubt. The Lord incarnated as *Veda Vyasa* in the shape of books. This is a still lower rung of the spiritual ladder. When the *Vedas* came in book-form through Vyasa, the great compiler, that was only a beginning.

The beginning part of the *Vedas* is replete with *yajnas* (sacrifices) and various kinds of rituals. *Yajnas* are necessary for people to get acquainted with the scripture. Rituals gradually chasten their mind and make them fit to perceive higher truths. This first section of the *Vedas* is known as 'Karma Kanda', the part that recommends action. People follow this for the fulfilment of their desires.

Then there are various hymns to deities, which are innumerable. Recitation of these hymns inclines the mind towards stability. Some control is gained over our senses and we lead a regulated life. This section of the *Vedas* is known as 'Upasana Kanda', the part of devotion and worship. Man's spiritual life or quest for eternal peace and lasting prosperity starts in this manner. Thus the state of devotion or Bhakti follows 'Citta suddhi', purity of mind.

Last of all, true knowledge dawns and the process culminates in the realisation of the highest Reality which is termed Brahman, Siva or the Absolute—the state that is free from all attributes. This third section of the *Vedas*, that gives the knowledge of Supreme self, is called *Jnana Kanda*, which is known as *Vedanta* (Veda + anta), the ending parts of the *Vedas*.

The *Jnana Kanda*, embodying the spiritual teachings of the *Vedas*, has always been cited as the highest authority by all our teachers, philosophers and writers who even differed with one another in convincing their followers. *Kasakrtsna*, *Oudulomi* and *Vyasa* were the brilliant ones among them. But Vyasa's presentation of the Vedanta Philosophy with the help of his *Brahma Sutras* became predominant. Through these Vedanta Sutras, he analysed, synthesized and harmonised the seemingly conflicting teachings of the *Upanisads*. He wrote *Puranas* which expound the teachings of the *Vedas* and *Vedanta* etc. in an elaborate manner for the benefit of the people of common understanding. Thus the instructions also were codified, put into writing and placed before the students in

the shape of books.

With the advent of *Kali Yuga*, the age of iron or the age of strife, Bhagavaan Sankara had to incarnate as *Jagadguru Adi Sankaracarya*. As the *Adi Jnana Guru* of *Kaliyuga* he entered into scholarly controversy with opponents of every concievable type, defeated all of them by means of irrefutable argument, and irresistible dialectics. He re-established the *Sanatana Vedic Dharma* and the *Vedanta Siddhanta* as taught by the *Upanisads*, the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita* on which he wrote elaborate commentaries in early 9th century A. D. These three monumental works of Sankara are known as the *Prasthana Trayi*. It was in this way that *Vedanta* developed as a comprehensive philosophy.

Vedanta is not a religion. It is an enquiry into the Self—'Who am I' as Sankara put it :

कोऽहं कस्मात् कुत आयात:
का मे जननी को मे तात:

इति परिभावय...

"Who am I ? Of whom was I born ?
From where did I come ? Who is my mother ?
Who is my father ? Contemplate on this" .

However, 'Vedanta' and 'Upanisad' became synonymous terms. Analytical exposition of the word 'Upanisad' is :

उप—effort, नि — intensity, सद् — to sit,

meaning thereby 'to sit near the teacher with intense effort to know the Supreme Self'. For this, one has humbly to approach the teacher who is adept both in theory and practice. 'तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरूमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणि: श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्। says the *Upanisad*.

According to M. P. Pandit the *Upanisads* are introduced as 'reports of insight' and not as philosophic speculations about the Ultimate Reality. As Sri Aurobindo observes, the *Rsis* of the *Upanisads* ask each other 'What dost thou know? and not 'What dost thou think?' Thus the *Upanisads* merely record the experiences

and realizations of the *Rsis* during their spiritual journey to the Brahman. Their standpoints and experiences may differ, they are, nevertheless, true. These are said to be the solace of life as they give an insight into the real nature of Truth. Arthur Schopenhaur (1888 A. D.) expressed :

> The *Upanisads* provide the most rewarding and the most elevating reading the world has to offer.
>
> It has been the consolation of my life and will be my consolation when I come to die.

That Ultimate Reality is एकमेवाऽद्वितीयम् 'One only without the second'—that which is beyond our thought, word and deed. Our mind cannot ordinarily comprehend that. Our senses cannot reach that Truth because It is extremely abstruse for comprehension by ordinary minds which are not chastened through discipline. It is therefore that the *Vedas* first teach us the disciplines and later on place the highest truth before us. Nobody can hide the Truth, but the means to attain That is the pure wisdom of the seeker. Thus said Vasistha to Rama :

ज्ञप्तेस्तु कारणं शुद्धा शिष्यप्रज्ञैव केवलम् ।। (योगवासिष्ठ)

Vedanta, however, continued to be interpreted by different thinkers according to their different levels of comprehension even after the advent of Sankaracarya (788-820 A. D.). Ramanujacarya (1016 A. D.) gave the qualified non-dualistic view (विशिष्टाद्वैत); Nimbarkacarya expressed dualistic-nondualistic view (द्वैताद्वैत) around 1162 A. D.; Madhavacarya (1197-1283 A. D.) pleaded for dualistic view (द्वैत सिद्धान्त) of *Vedanta*. Vallabhacarya's view was pure non-dual (शुद्धाद्वैत). Thus *Vedanta* was expounded with various interpretations by different Acaryas, Authors and thinkers. Consequently there came up different commentaries on the *Brahma Sutras*, the *Upanisads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. But Sankaracarya's monistic view of *Vedanta* continued to predominate over all the other interpretations. Sankara expounded the *Upanisads*, also known as *Brahma Vidya*, on the basis of his successful commentary on the Brahma *Sutras*. This gave an exalted place to his *Advaita Vedanta* which holds that God, soul and the world are not distinct entities but are only seeming diversifications of the Transcendental

Reality—Brahman— through *maya* or *avidya*.

In the series of post-Sankara *Advaitavadins*, Vidyaranya (14th century) was the most celebrated author. Previously he was known as Madhava, brother of Sayanacarya, the great vedic commentator. His name stands out among words of abundant praise in the inscriptions relating to the emergency of the Vijayanagar. He was Prime Minsiter of the king of Vijayanagar. His life, spent in the midst of varied activity at the court of Bukk Raya, had its culmination in the quiet bliss of his Supreme spiritual exaltation. He is said to have been the Head of Sringeri *Math*, one of the four principal Maths established by Bhagavaan Sankaracarya from 1377-1386 A. D. It is also said about him that he found 'Liberation in Life,' Jivanmukti like the King Janaka referred to in the *Upanisads* and the *Bhagavadgita*. In his conclusions and his interpretations of the *Advaita Vedanta* he followed his predecessors especially Sankarcarya, the great *Guru* of the present iron age in which we live today. He elucidated the established Vedantic doctrines in the works he wrote: *Pancadasi, Vivarnaprameya Sangraha, Jivannertiviveka, Sankaradigvijaya* etc. besides his re-nowned philosophical compilation *Sarvadarsana Sangraha*. His most popular work is *Pancadasi*. He "advocates a particular view according to which the consciousness conditioned by the subtle and the gross body is known as Kutastha and the consciousness that transcends the subtle and the gross body is Brahman. God is the consciousness reflected in *maya* which is present in Brahman and the soul is the reality that is reflected in mind which is the predominant factor in the subtle body that is present in the Kutastha".

Pancadasi consists of *pancadasa prakarana* in which Vidyaranya deals with different Vedantic topics of metaphysical and spiritual importance. The fifteen chapters are grouped into three quintets. The first group of five chapters named *Viveka Pancaka* deals with the discrimination of the real from the non-real. This is considered to be the 'sat' (existence) aspect of Brahman.

In the first chapter (of 35 verses) *Tattva Viveka* (तत्त्वविवेक) 'the differentiation of the real principle', Vidyaranya makes it clear that the disciple should first develop in himself the ability to

discriminate the real from the non-real. Various methods are indicated in the *Pancadasi* for gaining discrimination. One of the most useful methods is the analysis of the three states of experience viz. waking, dream and deep sleep. Such analysis makes one realize that the Self persists in all the states while the objects vary and are inconstant. The self which consists in consciousness is of one essence and does not undergo any change 'संविदेकरूपा न भिद्यते' (1-4). Even in dreamless state there is abiding consciousness that stands witness to the state, as is proved by the subsequent remembrance of that state—'सुखमहसस्वाप्सं न किंचिदवेदिशम् (*Upanisad*), 'I had a sound sleep ; I did not know anything'. This is the eternal self whose nature is bliss. Time makes no difference to it, nor space ; the plurality of objects does not make any split in the self. Sri Vidyaranya says :

वृत्तीनामनुवृत्तिस्तु प्रयत्नात् प्रथमादपि।
अदृष्टासकृदभ्याससंस्कारसचिवाद्भ्वेत्।। (I—57)

That bliss is experienced when the mind continues to be fixed in *Paramatman* in the state of *samadhi* as a result of the effort of will made prior to its achievement and helped by the merits of previous births.

This experience promotes reighteous conduct and other qualities automatically though the *sadhaka* does not seek them and leads to a direct cognition of *Brahman* which really destroys all actions accumulated in this beginningless world over the past and present births, as the *Upanisad* proclaims :

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे।।

(XI—7) (Mundaka Up. 2.2.9)

When a man has experienced the Highest, the knots of his heart are sundered ; all his doubts are dispelled and all his actions perish. We must know that the actions originate from ignorance and with the dawn of knowledge they are bound to vanish.

About the direct cognition of *Brahman*, Vidyaranya says :

धर्ममेद्यमिमं प्राहु : समाधिं योगवित्तमा : ।
वर्षत्येष यतो धर्माऽमृतधारा सहस्त्रश : ।। (I—60)

The experts in *yoga* call this *samadhi,* "a rain cloud
of dharma" because it pours forth countless showers
of the bliss of *dharma.*

The second chapter (consisting of 109 verses) deals with महाभूतविवेक — 'Differentiation of the elements'. Here the reasoning based on the principle of co-presence and co-absence (अन्वय–व्यतिरेक) is adopted for showing that the self which is of the nature of consciousness, is constant and therefore real while the phenomena constituting the world are inconstant and therefore non-real. Here Vidyaranya has a word of caution : 'तर्क्यतां मा वितर्क्यताम् 'Let logic that follows one's experience be employed but not bad logic'. Such discrimination of the elements from the non-dual reality ensures abiding peace.

In the third chapter (43 verses) Vidyaranya states that it is possible to know Brahman which is hidden in the cave of five sheaths, पंचकोष (Panca kosas) which, as it were, cover the self. The Sheaths are :

(i) *Anamaya kosa*, the physical sheath
(ii) *Pranamaya kosa*, the vital sheath
(iii) *Manomaya kosa,* the mind sheath
(iv) *Vijnanamaya kosa*, the sheath of intellect
(v) *Anandamaya kosa*, the sheath of bliss

The principle applied in this investigation is, what is gorsser, more external and less pervasive is less real than what is subtler, more internal and more pervasive. Vidyaranaya has illustrated this well in his *Pancadasi*, elsewhere :

यथा मुञ्जादिषीकैवमात्मा युक्त्या समुद्धृत : ।
शरीर त्रितयाद्धीरै : परं ब्रह्मैव जायते ।। (1. 42)

'As the slender, internal pith of *munja* grass can be detached from its coarse external covering, so the self can be distinguished through reasoning from the three bodies (स्थूल, सूक्ष्म, कारण gross, subtle and causal) or the five sheaths. Then the self is recognised as the Supreme consciousness.

Swami Svahananda in the Notes of his translation says :

> The wise who have control of the
> intellect and are patient, can do so.

We can percieve that the self is subtler than ether. One may think of the self being without ether but not of ether being there without the self. To doubt the existence of the self is as ridiculous as the doubt expressed by man 'जिह्वा मेऽस्ति न वा' (III 43) 'Have I tongue or not?'. Thus through this kind of investigation one arrives at the truth that the self is supremely real because it is the subtlest and the inmost being which is non-dual. The *Pancadasi* as endorsed by the *Upanisad* tells us :

स एवं ब्रह्म वेदेष ब्रह्मैव भवति स्वयम् (III. 43)

> He who knows *Brahman* thus,
> himself becomes *Brahman*.

In the fourth chapter (69 verses)—द्वैत विवेक–'Differentiation of Duality', it is described how the duality created by *jiva* differs from that created by *Isvara*.

Vidyaranya says that the world of duality created by *Isvara* is rather a help than an obstacle to a direct knowledge of non-duality:

'अबाधकं साधकं च द्वैतमीश्वरनिर्मितम्' (IV. 42)

He further says that the world of duality created by *jiva* is of two kinds : That which conforms and that which does not conform to the spiritual injunctions. The former should be kept in mind until *Brahman* is realized (IV. 43). We have to understand here that the creation does not prevent knowledge of *Brahman* in the same way as the blue of the sky does not prejudice the knowledge of space.

The fifth chapter (of 8 verses) is महावाक्य विवेक : 'Fixing the meaning of the great sayings.' Here the identity of *Brahman* and *Atman* is established with the help of the four great statements :

(i) प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म (ऋग्वेद) 'Consciousness is *Brahman*'.

(ii) अहं ब्रह्माऽस्मि (यजुर्वेद) 'I (*jiva*) am *Brahman*'.

(iii) तत्त्वमसि (सामवेद) 'Thou art That', and

(iv) अयमात्मा ब्रह्म (अथर्वेद) 'This *Pratyagatma* is *Brahman*'

The next sequence of five chapters which deals with the *cit* (consciousness) aspect of *Brahman* bears the name '*Deepa pancaka')* (दीप पञ्चकः) expounding the nature of the self as pure consciousness. Therefore the sixth chapter of (290 verses) of the *Pancadasi* is named चित्रदीपः 'The Lamp of the Picture'. There is an illustration given through comparison with a picture. In *Citradipa*, the *kutastha* or the witness consciousness is compared to the canvas on which the world picture is painted. It is on the canvas that various painted pictures appear—both of inanimate things like mountains and animate things like men and animals, etc. In the same way, this variegated world appears on the consciousness, which is the immutable self. We cannot negate consciousness even as the basic canvas cannot be dispensed with. Consciousness can never experience its own non-existence for it is eternal (Ref. VI. 254). The churned essence of the teaching is that the self is the seat of Supreme love. This blissful nature of the self *(Brahman* as we call it) is explained in great detail in *Ananda-pancaka,* that consists of the last five chapters of the *Pancadasi*. The self is not only existence and consciousness, it is also bliss, which is its supreme value. It was for understanding this blissful nature of the self that the celebrated sage of the *Upanisad, Yogi Yajnavalkya* said to *Maitreyi* in the *Brahadaranyak Upanisad* :

न पुत्रस्य कामाय पुत्रो प्रियः भवति।
आत्मनस्तु कामाय पुत्रो प्रियः भवति।।

न भार्याया कामाय भार्या प्रिया भवति।
आत्मनस्तु कामाय भार्या प्रिया भवति।।

न वित्तस्य कामाय वित्तं प्रियं भवति।
आत्मनस्तु कामाय वित्तं प्रियं भवति।। इत्यादि

> Anything becomes dear, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the self—the seat of supreme love. That explains why one of the appellation of Lord *Siva* is *Kameswara.*

A fundamental question arises here. How and wherefrom does ignorance come in ? Or, How does the one Reality appear as the world of plurality ?

Many theories are put forward in this regard. But in truth causation itself is unintelligible. However, the *Pancadasi,* quoting *sruti* says :

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ।
अस्यावयवभूतैस्तु व्याप्तं सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
(VI. 123) (*Svetsvatar up.* 4.4.70)

> '*Maya* is *Prakrti*, the material cause of the universe and the Lord of *maya* is the great *Iswara* who pervades the whole universe, consisting of sentient and insentient objects which are like parts of That *Iswara*'.

From the standpoint of the ordinary wordly people *maya* is real *(vastavi)*; they have no reason to doubt its reality. From the standpoint of those who have realized the teaching of scripture, *maya* is unreal (*tuccha*); for them there is no world. For them *maya* is that (*ya*) which is not (*ma*). And, for those who seek to understand through reasoning, *maya* is indeterminable (*anirvacaniya*) (VI. 130). For them it is uncharacterisable either as real or as unreal or both as real and unreal. Plurality appears in *Brahman* due to *maya*, even as a rope is mistaken for the snake. This is known as *Vivarta,* transfiguration, in *Advaita Vedanta* Doctrine. The mystery of *maya* cannnot be solved by asking questions. It is that which makes apparently possible what is inherently impossible (Ref. VI. 135). *Vidyaranya* further explains 'The magic show looks wonderful and inexpressible as long as the magician is not directly known, but when the magician is so known, the magic show is known as such and is no longer wonderful' (Ref. VI. 136). *Maya*, like magic show is clearly manifest, yet it is inexpressible. Therefore, what is necessary is that we should transcend *maya* (VI. 138) and not lose

time and energy in going deep into the mystery (of *maya*). At the end of this long chapter the *Pancadasi* offers a simple answer :

> जगच्चित्रं स्वचैतन्ये पटे चित्रमिवार्पितम् ।
> मायया तदुपेक्ष्यैव चैतन्यं परिशेष्यताम् ।। (VI. 289)
>
> On the supreme consciousness the world is drawn like a picture on canvas; thus is *maya* superimposed on consciousness. When we forget the adventitious distinctions consciousness alone remains.

The seventh chapter is the biggest comprising 298 verses titled तृप्तिदीप: 'The Lamp of perfect satisfaction'. The revered author beigns this chapter with a verse from the *Brahadaranyaka Upanised* (4.4.12) :

> आत्मानं चेद् विजानीयादयमस्मीति पूरुषः ।
> किमिच्छन् कस्य कामाय शरीरमनुसंज्वरेत् ।। (VII. 1)
>
> When a man has realized the identity of his self with the *Paramatman*, desiring what and for whose sake should he allow himself, to be afflicted following the body's affliction !

The suffering of a *jiva* is due to his ignorance of his real nature and that of identifying himself with the body. When both the forms of ignorance are removed, desires and sufferings also cease. *Vidyaranya* tells us that '*Brahman* as the self is self-luminous and can always be directly experienced' :

> स्वयंप्रकाशचैतन्यमपरोक्षं सदा यतः (VII. 21)

He further affirms that the self is ever-cognized. Therefore we speak of its being known or unknown, as is supported by the illustration of the "tenth man". This refers to the well-known Vedic story (VII. 22). Ten ignorant men crossed a river. Then they counted their number and found it was nine, for each left himself out. They began to cry. A wayfarer then came, counted and pointed to the last man 'you are the tenth'. He had forgotten to count himself. This was due to his presence being obscured by ignorance or *maya*. Ignorance was removed and he found himself. To confirm this

Vidyaranya cites a verse from the *Upadesasahasri* (4.5) of *Adi Sankaracarya* :

> देहात्मज्ञानवज्ज्ञानं देहात्मज्ञानबाधकम् ।
> आत्मन्येव भवेद्यस्य स नेच्छन्नपि मुच्यते ।। (VII 20)
>
> When a man is as firmly convinced of his identity with *Brahman* as an ordinary man is convinced of his identity with the body, he is liberated even if he does not wish for it.

No injunctions are applicable to him, as he is not concerned about the fruit of his actions. He has no motive while doing anything. *Pancadasi* describes his standing :

> गुञ्जापुञ्जादि दह्येत नान्यारोपितवह्निना ।
> नान्यारोपिसंसारधर्मानेवमहं भजे ।। (VII. 259)
>
> Seeing a bush of red *gunja* berries from a distance one may suppose that there is a fire, but such an imaginary fire does not affect the bush. So the wordly duties and qualities attributed to me by others do not affect me. Such a soul is blessed, blessed and always blessed:
>
> अज्ञप्रबोधान्नैवान्यत्कार्यमस्त्यत्र तद्विद : । (VII. 290)
>
> In this world he has no other duty except awakening the ignorant.

The eighth chapter (76 verses) is named *Kutastha-deep*, 'the Lamp of Kutastha'. It offers an exposition of the nature of the immutable Self which is the witness-consciousness, unchanging, flawless and eternal: 'कूटवन्निर्विकारेण स्थितः कूटस्थ उच्यते'—Like the anvil in the simth's shop which serves as the supporting for beating the metal into various shapes, without itself changing; the self remains as the immutable witness of changes in the physcial and the psychical orders ; hence it is called the *kutastha*. According to the *Upadesasahasri*, *Kutastha* is *pratyagatma*, the inner principle. It is different from *jiva* or *cidabhasa*, which is only the reflection of pure consciousness in the modifications (vrittis) of which the intellect is composed. *Jiva* continues in transmigration but it

perishes with liberation where the body perishes once for all. *Kutastha* is ever associationless ; it does not change. The wise who understand its purport, ever abide in the ocean of bliss :

> मायामेघो जगन्नीरं वर्षत्वेष यथा तथा।
> चिदाकाशस्य नो हार्निन वा लाभ इति स्थितिः।। (VIII. 75)

> Like a cloud which pours out streams of rain, *maya* creates the jagat (world). As the ether is not affected by rain so pure consciousness (that I am) suffers neither gain nor loss from anything in the phenomenal world. That is the conviction of the wise.

'The Lamp of Meditation' ध्यानदीपः is the ninth chapter (158 verses) that discusses 'the great use of meditation'. *Sri Vidyaranya* compares it to delusion, which culminates in a fruitful result. I quote T. M. P. Mahadevan who gives lucid expression to *Vidyaranya's* thought : 'The man who mistakes the lamp light for a gem and gets to the place whence the light comes, gains nothing; whereas the person who mistakes the light of the gem for the gem itself, obtaines the precious stone. Although both are cases of delusion, the latter is a fruitful one. When the attributeless *Brahman* is meditated upon, the content of meditation is not itself *Brahman*. But the contemplation leads to *Brahman* realization. Thus for those who are not qualified for gaining true knowledge through enquiry, *Vidyaranya* recommends the *Yoga* of meditation. He himself states :

> देहाभिमानं विध्वस्य ध्यानादात्मानमद्वयम्।
> पश्यन्मर्त्योऽमृतो भूत्वा ह्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते।। (IX. 157)

> Destryong his idea that the body is the self, through meditation, a man sees the nondual self, becomes immortal and realizes *Brahman* in this body itself.

In the tenth chapter (26 verses) नाटकदीप 'The Lamp of the theatre', the analogy of the dramatic stage is employed. Just as the lamp on the stage illumines without being affected by the movements of the actors and the audience, even so the witness

which is eternal and immutable, manifests all things, both within and without and in their absence also.

Now we come to *ananda pancaka*, the quintet of bliss. In its variety which is only apparent it describes the state of the person who is accomplished having attained the blissful experience of the Supreme Truth, *Brahmananda* 'the bliss of *Brahman*'. This section concerns the *(ananda)* bliss aspect of *Brahman.*

The eleventh chapter (134 verses) of this Vedantic encyclopaedia, the *Pancadasi*, deals with 'the Bliss of *Yoga*' under the caption ब्रह्मानन्दे योगानन्दः 'Felicity arising from concentration' that leads to *Brahmananda*. This state is expressed by *Vidyaranya* in the verse :

समाधिनिर्धूतमलस्य चेतसो
निवेशितस्यात्मनि यत्सुखं भवेत् ।
न शक्यते वर्णयितुं गिरा तदा
स्वयं तदन्तःकरणेन गृह्यते ।। (XI. 118)

The bliss, arising from absorption in the concentration of the self, when all sins and taints are washed off through the practice of *Samadhi*, cannot be described in words ; one has to feel it in one's own heart.

The twelfth chapter (90 verses) is titled ब्रह्मानन्दे आत्मानन्दः 'The Bliss of the Self towards the Supreme Bliss'. Here one has to understand that all other objects are dear to one for the sake of one's own self. This practice is for the good of persons of spiritually dull intellect.

The thirteenth chapter (105 verses) ब्रह्मानन्दे अद्वैतानन्दः 'The Bliss of non-duality' establishes that the whole world, from *Akasa* to the physical body is not different from bliss. Therefore the bliss of the self is of the nature of the non-dual *Brahman* (XIII. 2) which is to be obtained by meditating on the unreality of the world.

The fourteenth chapter (69 verses) is ब्रह्मानन्दे विद्यानन्दः 'The bliss of knowledge' under 'the bliss of *Brahman*.' This describes the bliss of knowledge experienced by one who has realized :

(i) the Bliss of *Brahman* through *Yoga*

(ii) discrimination of the self ; and

(iii) the unreality of duality through constant reflection, as described in the previous three chapters.

The fifteenth and last chapter (35 verses) of the *Pancadasi*, a wonderful treatise on the *Advaita Vedanta* Philosophy, is ब्रह्मानन्दे विषयानन्द : 'The Bliss of objects under the Bliss of *Brahman*'. This bliss is discussed because it partakes of the nature of spiritual bliss and forms, as it were, an entrance into the former. The *sruti* says that this is the supreme bliss which is indivisible and homogenous; it is *Brahman* Himself and that 'other beings, individuated by *avidya* enjoy only a fraction of it' as is endorsed by the *upanisad* also :

'एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति ।

(Brahd Upa. 4.3.32)

This last quintet of the *Pancadasi* is treated as a separate book as it is the Bliss of *Brahman* (ब्रह्मानन्द :) only, that is described therein in its different aspects.

Thus, *Vidyaranaya Swamin* has set forth the essentials of *Advaita Vedanta* in his great book the *Pancadasi*, that runs to 1571 Sanskrit verses.

In the end I present a verse from the *Vedanta Siddhanta Muktayali* of *Prakasananda* as an auspicious closing :

स्नातं तेन समस्ततीर्थसलिले दत्ता च सर्वावनि :
यज्ञानां च कृतं सहस्त्रमखिला : देवाक्ष्चसन्तर्पिता : ।

संसाराच्च समुद्धृता : स्वपितरास्त्रैलोक्यपूजाऽप्यसौ
यस्य ब्रह्मविचारणे क्षणमपि स्थैर्य मन : प्राप्नुयात् ।।

One whose mind has become steady in the thought of *Brahman* even for a moment, it is granted that he acquires the merit of ablution at all the sacred places on this earth ; the merit of giving the whole earth in charity ; the merit of performing thousands of

yajnas and the merit of pleasing (with his worship) all the *Devas*. Such a blessed person is understood to have lifted up all his manes from the ocean of *samsara*. He is worshipped in all the three worlds.

Such an Avadhuta, Bhagavaan Gopinathji Maharaj, emerged from Kashmir in this twentieth century. Our hundred thousand pranams to Him.

Aum.

References

1. Sanskrit Commentary of *Adi Sankaracarya's Upadesa Pancakam*, by Pandit Nidan Kak of Rainawari, Kashmir.
2. Sadguru *Pancadasi* by Jankinath Kaul 'Kamal'.
3. *Guru-Gita* of *Skanda Purana.*
4. *Pancadasi* of *Vidyaranya,* Eng. Tr. Swami Sivahananda.
5. *Pancadasi-Sar* by Tika Lal Kaul (Achkan) with Hindi Tr. and commentary.
6. *Daksinamurti-Stotram* of *Sankaracarya.*
7. *Carapatapanjarika Stotram* of *Sankaracarya.*
8. *Yogavasistha.*
9. Introduction to *'Anubhuti Prakash'* of Vidyaranya by Dr. Godabarish Mishra, Radha Krishan Institute of Advanced Philosophy, Madras University.
10. Introduction to *Pancadasi* by T.M.P. Mahadevan (Former Director & Professor of the above Institute).
11. *Brahadaranyaka Upanisad.*
12. *Mundaka Upanisad.*
13. *Svetasvatara Upanisad.*
14. *Upadesa Sahasri* of *Sankaracarya.*
15. *Vedanta-Siddhanta-Muktavali* of *Prakasananda.*

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF KASHMIR SAIVISM

—B. N. Pandit.

Philosophy is called *darsana* in Sanskrt, but in fact, *darsana* is something far higher than philosophy which is the superior human wisdom developed by means of minute thinking and expressed through a logical method of convincing argumentation. *Darsana*, on the other hand, is basically an intuitional experience of the truth, brought about by means of practice in yoga. Its logical expression through language is a secondary type of *darsana*. The Indian saints discovered, practised and propagated several systems of yoga. The yoga of Patanjali leads to a state of *susupti,* the sleeping state of life-force, in which a practitioner comes face to face with his individual self that transcends all physical and mental aids to knowledge and shines through its own psychic lustre of consciousness. Such *yoga-samadhi* yields a direct realization of the nature of pure and finite I-consciousness, but does not reveal to its practitioner his divine nature, called Godhead, nor does it reveal God as the master conducting divine activities including cosmic creation etc. Besides, *Samadhi yoga* is also of several standards, leading to several higher and lower steps in the state of dreamless sleep.

The originators of *Nyaya Vaisesika* philosophy practised the ancient *Pasupata* yoga, come down through tradition from the prehistoric ages. They discovered the individual self as consisting of pure and calm finite consciousness, freed from all physical, mental and sensual disturbances and saw the phenomenon and its master as entities different from the self. As for the self, they discovered it as absolutely tranquil and pure individual I-consciousness freed even from the clear flutter of the egoistic awareness of I-ness in their yoga *samadhi* and had thus a *darsana,* or face to face realization, of a self-evident tranquil existence of their individual consciousness, having no relation with anything and shining through its own psychic lustre, with all the psychic means to know, to do and to desire, lying in an absolute inactiveness. They saw themselves as having attained perfect

freedom from all propensity towards all objective or even subjective activities. This yogic path of *Nyaya Vaisesika* did not reveal to its practitioners the divine nature of the self. As for their assertion about the principles of theism, it was a result of their mental calculation, worked out by means of logical reasoning and supported by scriptural statements.

The *samadhi yoga* of Patanjali, patronized by the teachers of *Samkhya yoga* system, carried its practitioners to a point in dreamless sleep where they saw their individual self as not having at all any mental or physical appearance. They lost even their thinking and understanding capacities constituting *manas* and *budhi,* as well as their egoistic sense called *ahankara*, in the state of *nirvikalpa samadhi.* All such instrumental psychic aids become totally absorbed into dreamless sleep and the individual self is left absolutely alone in the *nirvikalpa* state. That is the *kaivalya* state to which the practical path of *Samkhya yoga*, as discussed in the *yogasutra* of Patanjali, can lead a practitioner. Neither the infinite and all-pervading nature of the self, nor its character of divine omnipotence, is revealed to a practitioner in the *darsana* or revelation of the self in the *samadhi* yoga of the system of Patanjali adopted by the teachers of *Samkhya yoga* philosophy, which does not discover God even through any logical calculations. Such *samadhi yoga* leads to a finer state of *susupti* or deep sleep, than that of the *apavarga* state of *Nyaya Vaisesika.*

It is on such account that even a *yogin* such as Patanjali did not see *Isvara* as the Almighty God, but took him just as ever-pure and ever liberated *purusa-visesa* who taught yoga even to ancient teachers like Kapila. Isvarakrsna, the builder of the current *Samkhya* philosophy, did not mention at all the name of God in his *Samkhya-karika.*

The Buddhist philosophers denied the existence of not only God, but even of the individual soul. They attained a state of the deepest sleep in which they could not find any entity as witnessing the constant flow of tranquil and serene momentary mental consciousness, termed by them as *vijnana* and identified frequently with *citta*, the mind. They discovered the flux of *citta* as flowing constantly and taking up the form of I-ness called *alaya*

vijnana and this-ness called *pravrtti vijnana,* just on account of the past impressions, come down into the flow of the successive momentary *cittas* on account of the effect of beginningless basic ignorance, which has been having all along a powerful grip on them. Such realization of an absolute idealism by them led to the discovery of the principle that the currents of *vijanana* also come to an end at the time of *nirvana,* meaning literally an extinction of the current of the light of individual consciousness. The extinction of the flow of individual mental consciousness was declared by them as the final goal of life.

Such nature and character of *darsana* (revelation) as is experienced by the practitioners of different systems of yoga leads to *susupti,* the dreamless state. The yoga named *nirodha samadhi,* and practised by the ancient teachers of *Advaita Vedanta,* led some of them to the discovery of a constantly existent consciousness of the self that is a witness to all the different steps in *susupti,* as well as to all the momentary flickers of mental consciousness, seen by the Buddhists as the flux of *vijnana.* They termed this constantly existent consciousness as *atman.*

Realizing the *atman* as infinite and all-pervading consciousness as also as the reality serving as the original base on which all the false phenomenal manifestations have been eternally appearing, they termed it as *Brahman,* the infinite and all-pervading consciousness. Seeing *Brahman* as absolutely pure, they could not locate the source of phenomenal existence in Him. They felt that there must be some impure element, in addition to *Brahman,* which can be responsible for the phenomenal manifestation. They termed it as *avidya*, beginningless ignorance ; visualized in two aspects of individuality and universality, and they took these aspects of it as the basis of the false appearance of *Brahman* in the forms of soul and God. They mean to say that all individuals have beginninglessly been in the grip of such ignorance, and as a result of its grip on them, they see the single *Brahman* as God, as soul and as unconscious substances. All the three entities are mere appearances. These do not exist in reality. Just like the sons of a barren woman, they do not really exist but appear falsely like dream-world, to beings lying in the grip of *Avidya*. They proclaimed that *Atman*, known as *Brahman,* is

the only true reality and is eternal, infinite and absolute consciousness. They took it as *sat* (existent), *cit* (consciousness) and *ananda* (blissfulness), because they had an experience of the taste of self-bliss in their *nirodha samadhi*. Since the revelation of the truth, attained through such *samadhi*, was confined to individual consciousness, it did not reveal to a practitioner the nature of infinite and divine potency, known as Godhead and on this account the *Vedantins* of the *Advaita* school had to look for the origin of the phenomenal existence in the above-mentioned imagined entity called *avidya* on account of which all ignorant people see *Brahman* as God, as soul or *jiva* and as the world.

The yoga systems of *Pancaratra, Saktism* and *Saivism* lead aspirants to the revelation of the truth as it shines at different lower and higher steps of *turya*, to that fourth state of life force, which is the state of spontaneous revelation of the real nature of the self. The practitioners of these systems of yoga see the phenomenon as a creation manifested by God, the infinite consciousness, endowed with infinite divine potency to create, to preserve and to dissolve all phenomena. Those resting at some lower steps of *turya* see everything and each being as controlled and driven by the divine powers of God, but see them as entities different from Him. Such aspirants rest in the field of pluralism of perfect diversity or *dvaita*. *Pasupatas* and the *Vaisnavas* of the sect of Madhava are clear *dvaitins*. Such *yogins* as discover the truth at an intermediary step of *turya*, see a sort of unity within the diversity of God, soul and the world. They discover themselves as part and parcel of God, but do not yet shed their individuality, being one with God and yet being partly distinct from His universal aspect. That is a state of *bhedabheda* which they actually attain after shedding their mortal forms. These aspirants are popularly known as *Visistadvaitins* and include, in addition to the followers of Ramanuja, all those proceeding through the paths of *Saiva-siddhanta* and *Srikanthamata*, as well as the followers of *Vaisnava* teachers like Bhaskara, Nimbarka, Caitanya and others.

Yogins discovering the truth as it shines far above *Turya*, see only God, manifesting Himself as all individual souls and lifeless substances. They shed their individuality and expand themselves into the infinite existence of God, as soon as they leave

their mortal form on the exhaustion of their *prarabdha karma*. Such yogins are the successful practitioners of *Vira Saivism.* The Vedantic aspirants that do not allow themselves to be taken away and pushed down into the currents of dry logic and that practise some *Tantric* methods of yoga, as did the great teachers like Gaudapada and Sankara, do also attain unity with the Absolute.

Kashmir Saivism teaches a system of superior yoga which leads to the highest step in self-realization, and yields a revelation of the innermost secrets of the nature of the self. The practitioners of this yoga see and feel every one and every thing as Almighty God, endowed with infinite divine potency and appearing playfully as all phenomena, all beings and all functions of the whole universe. They see everything as His play and recognize everything as He. Their monistic view has been termed by Narasimhagupta, the father of Abhinavagupta, as *pratyaksadvaita*, that is, a view of monism even in mundane perceptions. They see monism even with their eyes and feel it through all their senses. Such monistic view is "Siva drsti", the "Siva vision of Somananda" and this title of his important work suggests *pratyaksadvaita* as has been discussed by him in several chapters of his work. This absolute monism is the basic metaphysical principle of the philosophy of Kashmir Saivism and is termed therein as *paradvaita*, supreme and absolute monism. It is sufficiently different from the monism of Vedanta, on the one hand, and that of some other schools of *Saivism* and *Vaisnavism*, on the other hand.

The teachers and authors of Kashmir Saivism discovered and propagated several very important principles of spiritual philosophy and theology which are not known either in the Brahmanic philosophies of six *darsanas* or in the monkish philosophies of Buddhism, Jainism and Nathism, or in the devotional schools of Vaisnavism and Saivism of the South. The above mentioned absolute monism has neither been expressed in *Pasupata Saiva,* nor in *Siddhanta Saiva,* nor in *Virasaiva*, nor in the Saivism of Srikantha and Appayadiksita. The same is the case with the yoga doctrines of the *Trika* system over which Kashmir Saivism alone has a monopoly.

Another specific principle of the Saiva philosophy of Kashmir is the theistic absolutism of monistic character. There are many theistic schools of thought in the East and the West, but all of them are more or less allergic towards absolutism. Most of them believe in a personal God, living in a divine abode. Even pantheists of the West do not see God as an absolute reality beyond all phenomena. Advaita Vedanta is a school that maintains absolutism but it does not accept theism as an absolute truth and sees it as based on a wrong view of ignorant beings, on account of the impressions of their beginningless ignorance. Kashmir Saivism propounds the theory of the eternal existence of only the infinite and pure consciousness, lying beyond the reach of speech, mind and intellect. It is thus taken as an absolute reality. Theism has been accepted in it as the very essential nature of the absolute reality and that explains all the problems of the phenomenal existence. Vaisnava schools do not at all accept absolutism. The *Suddhadvaita* of Vallabha comes very close to Kashmir Saivism in its pantheistic views, but even this school pushes absolutism to the background. The great Hindi poet Suradasa, an ardent follower of Vallabha, has criticised and rather rediculed absolutism through a very wonderful and highly effective medium of beautiful poetry in his songs related to *Bhramara gita*, an episode of the life history of Lord Krsna. But Kashmir Saivism, though being devotional in outlook and attitude towards the divine existence as the school of Vallabha, resorts to a transcendental absolutism while dealing with the highest and the basic external reality which, according to its view, is an inexplicable, external, infinite and pure consciousness, which cannot be perceived or imagined or known objectively or expressed through any words, as it lies beyond the reach of all the faculties, serving as aids to knowing. Thus says Abhinavagupta about it :

दुर्विज्ञेया हि सावस्था किमप्येतदनुत्तरम् ।

Durvijneya hi savastha kimapyetad anuttaram. (T. A. II-28).

"It is very difficult to understand such a state. It is some transcendental reality beyond which nothing else exists" (T. A. II-28). Such theistic absolutism of monistic character is thus one of the most important specific principles of Kashmir Saivism.

Different schools of Indian thought establish either monism or pluralism or dualism or mono-dualism as the fundamental principle of their philosophy. But Kashmir Saivism establishes the theory of an absolute monism which embraces all theories in accordance with which only one eternal, infinite and absolute reality, being divinely potent to do anything and everything, manifests its own divine powers in the apparent forms of all phenomena seen through these theories of philosophy.

Kashmir Saivism does not approve of any theory that establishes anything other than the monistic absolute consciousness as a beginningless entity. Therefore it does not agree with the Vedantic principle of *avidya* even for the purpose of the explanation of the phenomenal manifestation. It solves such problems of monistic philosophy with the help of the principle of *spanda*, which was discovered by Vasugupta, developed by Bhatta Kallata, discussed by Somananda, clarified by Utpaladeva and explained clearly by Abhinavagupta. It finds mention in *Anuttara-prakasa-pancasika* by Adinatha and also in a more ancient work named *Para sambhu mahimna stava* by sage Durvasas; it was developed philosophically by only the above mentioned philosophers in their works on Kashmir Saivism. The absolute reality is calm and tranquil because it is free from the turbulence caused by five *Klesas* of *yoga sutra*. But it is not as calm as the pure space, because that can amount to insentience. It is always self-conscious and its consciousness is always aware of itself as well as its divine nature. Such self awareness of the absolute consciousness is a sort of psychic movement or action. Consciousness is self-luminous and that is its aspect of *Jinana* or knowing. Its becoming aware of itself is its aspect of action or *kriya*, which is a sort of stir, giving rise to blissfulness. It is not any physical movement or any mental restlessness, but a spiritual stir which can be felt by each and every living being in any blissful or wonderful psychic state. Such stir of self awareness makes the absolute consciousness playfully active and this activeness of the Absolute is the basic source of all phenomenal manifestation, including that of the beginningless ignorance of Vedanta, which also is thus a creation caused by *spanda* or spiritual vibratory movement of absolute consciousness. Five divine activities of

cosmic creation etc. are basically the outward manifestations of the divine powers of God, brought about by the nature of His *spanda*. This is one of the most important discoveries of Kashmir Saivism. God, while appearing as all phenomena, does not at all undergo any change in His basic character, because all this manifestation, brought about by *spanda,* appears in the manner of a reflection. The divine powers of God, getting reflected outwardly by virtue of His vibrative nature, called *spanda,* appear as all phenomena. This principle of reflectionary manifestation is the main cosmogonical principle of Kashmir Saivism and is a corollary to the principle of *spanda.*

Kashmir Saivism asserts that all phenomena that ever appear in the universe, enjoy an eternal existence in the absolute consciousness. These do not exist as things lying in a room or sheep sitting in a shed. These exist and shine there in the form of pure consciousness. A plant exists in a seed in the form of the potency of the seed to appear as a plant. The phenomenon exists in the absolute consciousness in the form of its divine potency, capable of appearing as such at its free will. The phenomenon has thus an eternal existence in the pure and absolute consciousness. That is one more special assertion of Kashmir Saivism which can be termed as spiritual realism. Such realism is quite different from the material realism of *Nyaya Vaisesika* and *Samkhya.* Being a type of realism, it cannot be counted as idealism, because the latter, as established by the idealists in India and Europe, takes the phenomenal existence as the outward manifestation of the past impressions of the mind, appearing like things in a dream. The phenomenon, according to Kashmir Saivism, is not a dream because it enjoys a permanent existence in time, is associated with the activities of all beings and each and every item in it has its own particular utility. It is to be taken as real for all practical purposes and that is the pragmatic realism worked out by the authors of Kashmir Saivism.

Most of the other schools of Indian philosophy find each and every being himself responsible for all his worldly misery and assert that he can attain liberation through his own efforts. But Kashmir Saivism, though advocating efforts for the attainment of freedom from all bondage, finds the basic source of both, bondage

and liberation, in the divine play of God. It is He who, in the previous part of His divine play, pushes His divinity and purity into oblivion, appears as a finite being and pushes finite beings into denser and denser pits of ignorance and consequent misery. But in the final part of such play, He bestows His divine grace on a being, who turns about, becomes interested in spiritual philosophy, comes into contact with some right preceptor, receives initiation in Saivite *sadhana*, attains correct knowledge of the theoretical principles of Saiva monism, practises Saiva yoga, develops intense devotion to the Lord and finally recognizes himself as none other than the Lord himself. These are the principles of divine wrath and divine grace known as *nigraha* and *anugraha*, as taught in Kashmir Saivism. These have been mentioned in some other schools of Indian philosophy as well, but have been developed philosophically in Kashmir Saivism alone. The activity of divine grace has been analysed into twentyseven main standards in *Tantraloka* of Abhinavagupta and such philosophical study of the topic, termed as *Saktipata,* is one more specific principle of Kashmir Saivism alone.

With respect to the practical aspect of philosophy, Kashmir Saivism developed an integral path of correct knowledge, intense devotion and a special type of *saiva yoga*, not known to other systems of practical philosophy. Such yoga is the main path that leads to self-realization. Theoretical knowledge saves a *yogin* from sticking to any blissful intermediary step in spiritual progress and devotion gives him the power with which he can digest the results of yoga quite rightly and is not waylaid by their misuse. Knowledge develops the faculties of his head and devotion grants him the faculties of heart and both, combined together, help him in reaching the highest goal to which Saiva yoga can lead him. The yoga system of Kashmir Saivism is known as the *Trika* system. It includes many methods of yoga, classified into three groups named *sambhave sakta* and *anava*. *Sambhava* method of yoga consists of practices in direct realization of the truth, without resorting to any mental efforts in knowing, meditating and contemplating. These include some practices in actual experience of correct being, free from all sorts of becoming. *Sambhava* is a yoga which does not involve any element of mental knowing,

which has to stop during its practice. *Sakta* consists of many types of practices in contemplation on the real nature and exact character of one's real self. *Anava* includes many practices in contemplative meditation on entities other than one's real self and such entities are his understanding sense, his life-force along with its five functions called five *pranas*, his physical form along with its nerve centres, the sound of his breathing and the outer world consisting of different aspects of time and space. The whole system of *Trika yoga* is a specific and peculiar system of *sadhana,* belonging to Kashmir Saivism alone. It has been discussed in detail, along with an elaborate system of *Trika* ritual, in the voluminous *Tantraloka* of Abhinavagupta which is a unique work on philosophy and theology in the whole of philosophical literature. The yoga of the *Trika* system is free from all types of repression on mind, suppression of emotions and instincts and starvation of the senses. It does not prescribe any painful practices nor does it insist on forcible renunciation. A Saiva practitioner has neither to leave his home and hearth, nor to roam as a begging monk, nor has he to practise any austere vows or any penance. This yoga of the *Trika* system is wonderful in nature, sweet in character and quick in results. But even then it is a fact that many people do not take it up because it is meant only for those aspirants on whom the Lord bestowes His divine grace. *Vairagya* is not a precondition for one to practise *Trike* yoga. A spontaneous indifference towards sensual pleasures develops automatically in a practitioner as soon as he tastes the sweetness of his self-bliss, roused by his practice in *Trikayoga,* because all sensual pleasure becomes tasteless in comparison with the superior sweetness of self-bliss. *Trikayoga* is open to all people who have the curiosity to realize Truth and who are devoted to Lord Siva, the Almighty God. There is no restriction based on caste, cread, sex etc. with respect to eligibility for initiation in the *Trika* system.

Saivism has analysed the subjective phenomenon into seven categories of living beings. These have been mentioned in the Saiva *Agamas* popular in South India as well and some light has been thrown on the character of some of them in *Saiva sidhanta* of Tamilnadu, but the subject has not been made quite clear in that school of thought. Kashmir Saivism has discussed

the character of all the seven categories of living beings quite convincingly in a philosophic way, quite clearly. Besides, it has solved the problem of the nature and origin of life as well. Life according to Kashmir Saivism is the capacity to know and to do and its origin is the absolute consciousness which is omniscient and omnipotent in character. It is playful in nature and its playful will is irrestrictible. It materializes as soon as it has a flutter. The absolute consciousness hides its real nature in numerous ways and consequently appears playfully as numerous types of living beings with a wonderful and multifarious variety among them.

Several schools of Saivism speak of the three types of impurity, but these have been studied and explained philosophically in Kashmir Saivism alone. It explains the character of the three impurities of finitude, diversity and past actions and correlates the synthesis and analysis of the threefold impurity with the classification of partly and fully impure categories of living beings.

Topics relating to the four types of speech and four states of life force have been discussed in some other schools of thought as well, but a convincing clarification of their respective character has only been provided by the authors of Kashmir Saivism. Bhartrhari discovered the four types of speech but no author of the philosophy of Sanskrit grammar has succeeded in explaining the character of *pasyanti* and *para.* Such lacunas have been filled by Saiva authors like Somananda, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta. *Para-vani* has been explained by them as the universal self awareness of the absolute consciousness and *pasyanti,* in their view, is the awareness of the state of initial and faint manifestation of diversity, taking an objective form of this-ness within the monistic unity of the subjective consciousness, shining as the infinite "I".

Pasyanti is thus the universal and infinite self-awareness, bearing a faint reflection of objectivity and shining as "I am this" and that, in the words of Somananda, is the self awareness at the stage of *Sadasiva. Tattvas* beyond *purusa* and *prakrti* have also been discussed philosophically in Kashmir Saivism alone. This school of philosophy has discussed in detail the analysis of objective phenomenon into thirtysix *tattvas* and has also analysed

the subjective phenomenon into seven categories of beings from *siva* to *sakala*. We cannot find such analytical studies in any other school of thought.

Many other secrets of higher spiritual philosophy have been discussed in Kashmir Saivism, but most of them are highly esoteric and mysterious in character and a worthy practitioner alone can grasp them. Some of these topics are liable to be misunderstood and some others can be misused by unworthy people. Therefore such topics have been just hinted at and not expressed in clear terms. Philosophers like Abhinavagupta have shown sufficient breadth of mind on these points and have clarified many esoteric doctrines of *Tantric* yoga, but still they have kept the essence of many of these topics a guarded secret. For instance, they have never uttered any *Tantric mantra* quite clearly, but have given such hints about them as can be taken up by the actual practitioners alone.

Vasugupta was a highly advanced *yogin* practising the highest type of *Saiva yoga* of the *Trika* system. He had attained a direct realization of the principles and doctrines of *Saiva* monism. It appears that he must have remained mostly absorbed in the tasteful experience of the intensely blissful nature of the absolute aspect of the self and may not have, consequently, taken interest in writing any detailed works on Saivism. He may have occasionally taught its doctrines to his disciples like Bhatta Kallata who learnt the essence of the theory and practice of *spanda* principle from him and developed it well in his *Spanda Karika.* He wrote several other works on Kashmir Saivism, most of which have been lost. *Spanda Karika* is the one work from his pen which is still available. He was followed by Somanada and Utpaladeva, both of whom were his younger contemporaries. All the three of them were perfectly successful *yogins,* having direct realization of the theoretical principles and doctrines of the practices of the Saiva monism of Kashmir. Besides, they were perfect masters of the Trika system of Kashmir Saivism as well as that of the *Kaula* system, started by Matsyendranatha. None of their works on Kaulism is available at present, but references to their works and quotations from them prove them to have been masters of that system as well. In addition they were perfectly well read scholars,

having perfect knowledge of all the schools of thought prevalent in that age. They were followed by Abhinavagupta who also was a great *yogin* and a perfect *jnanin* in addition to being a perfect master of all the subjects of study prevalent in his time. He had studied and practised even the systems of lower types of theology for the purpose of perfection in his knowledge. He was also a master of the philosophy and theology as well as the studies of both *Trika* and *Kaula* system of *Tantric sadhana*. His *Tantraloka* dealing with the philosophy, theology and ritual of the *Trika* and *Kaula* systems of *Tantric* yoga *sadhana*, is a unique work on the subjects.

The five great authors of Kashmir Saivism have been significantly metioned in the foregoing paragraph because their authority on the subject is unquestionable. The present paper has therefore been written generally in accordance with the teachings and works of only these five authors. They were followed by many schools, writers and practitioners who carried their mission ahead, wrote commentaries and books useful for beginners so that this tradition continued in Kashmir till the present exodus of Pandits from the valley. Some commentators and writers like Ksemaraja appeared after Abhinavagupta, but their views are to be examined in the light of the writings of the above mentioned five great masters in order to judge whether these are correct or incorrect. It is on this account that the works by later authors have not been generally relied upon in writing this paper on specific doctrines and principles of Kashmir Saivism.

Students and scholars of Saivism of Kashmir in the present age generally start their study of the subject with the works of Ksemaraja. The writer of the present paper feels that Ksemaraja did not try to clarify the subject but tried, instead, to confuse it for the purpose of impressing on the readers his greatness as a well read scholar and an efficient writer of wonderful things. He wanted to excel his predecessors in popularity as a scholar and writer. Besides, he betrays a strong prejudice against such a great and efficient teacher as Bhatta Kallata, whose name has been mentioned with great respect by Abhinavagupta. It appears that the maser was aware of such a tendency in Ksemaraja and did not like it. Though Ksemaraja was most competent as a scholar

and writer among all the known disciples of Abhinavagupta, the great teacher has not mentioned his name among his disciples in any of his works, while he mentions even Lumpaka who rendered day-to-day service to him. It is *just possible* that the above mentioned short-comings were the cause of the indifference of Abhinavagupta towards such an efficient disciple as Ksemaraja. Ksema, the cousin of Abhinavagupta, mentioned by name in the *Tantraloka*, is, without any doubt, Ksemagupta who is definitely different from Ksemaraja. The latter did not belong to the family of Guptas but to the family of the scholars who included great Saivas like Bhatta Bhutiraja, Helaraja, Induraja, Adityaraja and others.

कश्मीर शैव दर्शन पर एक विहंगम दृष्टि

–प्रो० मखनलाल कोकिलू

कश्मीर शैवदर्शन के विषय में कुछ प्रकाश डालने से पूर्व मैं कश्मीर–शैवदर्शन के प्रसिद्ध आचार्य जो नवीं सदी में विद्यमान थे श्री सोमानन्द की दार्शनिक रचना 'शिवदृष्टि' के प्रारम्भिक श्लोक का उल्लेख करना आवश्यक इसलिये समझता हूँ कि यही श्लोक कश्मीर–शैवदर्शन का सार है :–

अस्मद्रूप समाविष्ट :
स्वात्मनात्म निवारणे।
शिव : करोतु निजया
नमः शक्त्या ततात्मने।।

अर्थात् अपने परामर्श रुप शिव का सहारा लेकर मैं शिव, विघ्नरूपी शिव को नष्ट करने के लिए अपने जगत व्यापी शिव स्वरूप को, अपनी ही अनुसन्धनात्मिका शिव शक्ति से प्रणाम करता हूँ। इस श्लोक की व्याख्या इस ओर संकेत करती है कि साधना शिव है, साधक भी शिव है, विध्न भी शिव है और जो प्राप्त करने योग्य है वह भी शिव है। सारांश यह जगत् का झमेला शिवरूप ही है अतः शिव स्वरूप जगत के कार्य कलाप के साथ अपना शिवरूप अभिन्न मानकर शिवमय भाव को प्राप्त करो जिसे पाकर शैवयोगी किसी भी दशा में रहकर स्वात्मानन्द में विभोर होता है। इस प्रकार सीमित जीवन का असीम के साथ विलय ही शैव दर्शन का सार है।

कश्मीर शैवदर्शन कोई विशेष धर्म न होकर एक ऐसी पुस्तक है जिसका प्रत्येक पन्ना संसार के प्रत्येक व्यक्ति के लिए लिखा गया है। अर्थात् यह दर्शन किसी भी विशेष सम्प्रदाय के लिए न होकर सर्व धर्मानुयायियों के लिए ग्राह्य है। सही रूप में समझाा हुआ यह दर्शन आधुनिक विचारकों को अपनी उपयोगिता और सौन्दर्य प्रकट कर उनकी चिन्तनधारा को नई दिशा प्रदान कर सकता है। वास्तव में परिवर्तनशीलता में नित्यता और एकत्व में विश्वमयता की खोज करना ही इस दर्शन का प्रयास है। यद्यपि कश्मीर शैवदर्शन भारतीय आध्यात्मिक चिन्तनों की इकाइयों में से एक है पर बहिरंग रूप में इसकी उल्लेखनीय उपादेयता है। यह दर्शन एक साधक को स्वात्मसाक्षात्कार के लिए विविध यातनाओं को भुगतने के स्थान पर इस परमतथ्य को समझाता है कि पाना कुछ भी नहीं यह पहिले से ही हमने पाया है,

यह हम में विद्यमान है संवित् रूप में। इसे प्रमाणों द्वारा प्रमाणित करने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं। इसी लिए 'अनुत्तर' है अर्थात् जिसे शब्दों में बोला नहीं जाता या शब्दों से जाना नहीं जाता, क्योंकि यह स्वतन्त्र है। संस्कृत व्याकरण के रचयिता 'पाणिनी' ने इसीलिए कर्त्ता (Subject) की परिभाषा देते हुए कहा है कि 'स्वतन्त्रः कर्त्ता' अर्थात् कर्त्ता सदा स्वतन्त्र है उसे किसी भी परिधि में सीमित नहीं किया जा सकता है। वास्तव में पाणिनी की कर्त्ता की यह परिभाषा उसके शैवदर्शन की अभिज्ञान की पूर्ण परिचायक है। मेरे सद्गुरू ईश्वर स्वरूप लक्ष्मण जी महाराज कहा करते थे पाणिनी ने 'अइउण' आदि चौदह सूत्रों को गाकर यह स्पष्ट किया कि पहले सूत्र 'अइउण' का 'अ' ही सारे शास्त्रें का सार है और यही 'अनुत्तर' है यही प्रणव ऊँकार का आदि अक्षर है जो ऊकार सारे वेदों और आगमों का सार है। यही 'अकार' मातृका चक्र का पहला वर्ण है और इसी अकार में सारी शक्तियों का समावेश है और यही अकार संस्कृत हिन्दी अंग्रेजी उर्दू आदि विभिन्न लिपियों का सिरमौर है। अतः अपने में ही विद्यमान इस अनुत्तर को इस संवित को इस 'अ' कार को जानने के लिए हमें एक मात्र अनुसनधान परायणता की आवश्यकता है जिसके विना अन्दर का हमारा शिव शव सा वेबस पड़ा है। इसी अपने में विद्यमान संवित् शक्ति (Supreme Consciousness) को जानने के लिए सारे शास्त्रों ने गणपति या गणेश का स्मरण करने के लिए निर्देश दिया है। गणपति या गणेश का तात्पर्य शैवदर्शन के महाकेसरी आचार्य अभिनव गुप्त ने तन्त्रालोक में इस प्रकार समझाया है कि गण–सभी इन्द्रियों पर पतिः अहन्तारूपता से शासन करने वाला अथवा जो सभी इन्द्रियों में अपनी अहन्ता समर्पित करने वाला है अतः जो सभी इन्द्रिय देवियों का ईश्वर बना हुआ है वही संवित् शक्ति का पुत्र जो सारे प्रमेय मय जगत का प्रकाश वना हुआ है और जो स्वात्मस्थिति में आसीन है मेरे संवित् सागर में उछाल लाने की कृपा करे, ऋग्वेद में भी इसी संवित् की महत्ता पर यह कहकर प्रकाशा डाला गया है कि :–

"अहमेव स्वयमिदं वदामि नुष्टं देवीभिरुत मानुषीभिः"–इस वागम्भृणीय सूक्त में अद्वैत शैव दर्शन की पूरी छाप है। ऋग्वेद के एक अन्य प्रसिद्ध सूक्त पुरूषसूक्त में भी यही भाव झलकता है। आधुनिक युग में भौतिक पदार्थों के आकर्षण को ध्यान में रख कर कश्मीर शैवदेर्शन अतीव लाभकारी सिद्ध हो सकता है। क्योंकि यह दर्शन हमें सिखाता है कि :–

"संसारोऽस्ति न तत्त्वतस्तनुभृतां बन्धस्य वौ बन्धो यस्य न जातु तस्यवितथा मुक्तस्य मुक्ति मिथ्या मोहकृदेष रज्जुभुजंग छाया पिशाचभ्रमो मा किञ्चित् त्यज मा गृहाण विलस स्वरथो यथावति"।

वास्तव में शरीरधारी संसार के घेरे से परे है। जब संसार नहीं है तो बन्धन काहे यदि जीव बन्धन में फंसा माना जायेगा तो उस से उसका छूटना असम्भव है। जीव तो मुक्तात्मा है उसे मुक्त बनने के उपायों में लगना बेकार है। सही रूप में यदि देखा जाये तो बन्धन या मुक्ति आदि की भावना व्यर्थ के मोह द्वारा पैदा की गई है। यह रस्सी पर सांप के भ्रम के समान अथवा छाया में भूत के भ्रम के समान आभास मात्र हैं। हमें मुक्त बनने के लिए न कुछ छोड़ना है और न कुछ पकड़ना है। केवल हमें अपने संवित में स्थिर व स्वस्थ बनकर यह विमर्श करते हुए सारा व्यवहार करना है जो कुछ हो रहा सब ठीक हो रहा है।

अपनी (The first and last freedom) नामक पुस्तक में आधुनिक योगी स्वर्गीय जे॰ कृष्णमूर्ति ने कहा है कि उन्होंने "मा किंचित त्यज मा गृहाण" इसी मन्त्र की साधना की उन्होंने इस भाव को Choiceless awareness or an awarenss which is not of thought कहा है। उन्होंने समझाया है कि अनुसंधान (awakeness) न कोई चिन्तन है न कोई discipline है और न कोई habit है। अनुसंधान का अभ्यास नही किया जाता क्योंकि यह क्षण क्षण प्राप्त की जाने वाली जागरूकता है। ताऊवाद (Taoism) के Non-interferance भाव में और Zen के 'let go' भाव में और जे॰ कृष्णमूर्ति के Choiceless awareness में ही शांभव योग की झलक मिलती है।

अनुत्तर मार्ग में हमें पूजा, पूजक व पूज्य भेदात्मक मार्ग की वार्ता ही नही करनी चाहिए। किसने क्यों और कैसे इस मार्ग में प्रवेश करना है या इससे छूटना है यह बात ही नही है। यदि हम यह कहें कि यह माया है तो वह माया भी अद्वैत चित् प्रकाश के विना या उससे अलग होकर ठहर ही नही सकती। ये सारे उपाय निर्मल स्वात्म अनुभव रूप ही है फिर व्यर्थ में हमें चिन्ता किसलिये करनी है। राग–वैर, दुःख–सुख उत्पत्ति–संहार आदि जो भाव है वे जगत रूप स्वात्मा से अलग नहीं है अर्थात् ये विश्व स्वरूप स्वात्मा का ही अपना स्वभाव है उससे अलग नही। मानव जिस भाव या जिस रूप को देखकर उसके साथ लीन होता है उस रूपको संवित रूप ही देखो और उसी भावना से संसार के अन्य व्यवहार करो। संसार के पदार्थों की उत्पत्ति स्वयं नही हुई है। आप की भावना इच्छा से ही ये प्रकाशित दिखाई दे रहे हैं। इसी धारणा को सामने रखकर हमें भी उन रूपों के साथ एक होना चाहिए जिससे हमारी अद्वैत भावना जोर पकड़ेगी। कश्मीर शैव दर्शन आधुनिक व्यस्त जगत को यह उपदेश देता है कि संसार विषयक सभी भावनायें हमारे चित दर्पण में ही भासित हो रही है। चिद्दर्पण से भिन्न इनका कोई अस्तित्व ही नही है। ऐसा जानकर स्वात्म अनुभव में ठहर कर जीवन्मुक्ति का आनन्द लेलो। कयोंकि अहं परामर्श के

केवल स्पर्श मांत्र से ही इस सत्य का अनुभव होता है कि मैं आनन्द रूप हूँ। इस आनन्दावस्था में शरीर का आभास तथा इसके साथ जुड़े हुए अन्य संकल्पों या विकल्पों का आभास तनिक भी न हो कर केवल आनन्द का ही अनुभव इस प्रकार होता है जिस प्रकार बिजली के प्रकाश में अन्य सभी विद्यमान पदार्थों का अस्तित्व समाप्त होता है। इस प्रकार साधक विश्वात्म रूप संवित् का अनुभव करने से आनन्द में झूमने लगता है और आचार्य उत्पलदेव के कथन के अनुसार उस समय "दु:खान्यपि सुखायन्ते विषमप्यमेंतायेते "मोक्षायते च संसार": अर्थात् दु:ख या Evil Forces भी सुख के साधन बनते है और जहर भी अमृत सा लगता और संसार भी बंघन के स्थान पर मोक्ष का साधन बनता है। वास्तव में शैव, दर्शन की मान्यता है कि आत्मा पर "मैं आत्मा नहीं हूँ" इस प्रकार का अभिमान तथा अजड़ शरीर पर शरीर ही मैं हूँ ऐसा अभिमान बन्धन संसार का कारण है और इस से छुटकारा पाना ही मुक्ति है। इस आनन्द धाम की संवेदित दशा में "नसदा नतदा च चैकदेत्यपि सायत्र न का धीर्मवेत" अर्थात् तदा (तब) एकदा (एक दिन) और सर्वदा (हरदिन) इस प्रकार की काल कलना का ज्ञान नहीं रहता। यही संवित धाम की वास्तविक स्थिति है। हमारा कश्मीर शैवदर्शन बार बार इस बात को समझाता है कि व्यक्ति अपने अज्ञान के कारण अर्थात् अपने स्वरूप को न जानने के कारण ही या आणवमल के कारण बन्धन का शिकार बनता है। आचार्य अभिनव गुप्त जी ने कहा है :—

> मोक्षस्य नैव किंचिद् धामास्ति न चापि गमनमन्यत्र।
> अज्ञानग्रन्थिभिदा स्वशत्त्तयभिव्यक्तिता मोक्षः।।

अर्थात् मोक्ष का कोई निश्चित स्थान नहीं है ना ही मोक्ष प्राप्ति के लिए कही जाना होता है। अज्ञान रूपी बन्घन काटने पर जहां अपनी स्वरूप स्वातन्त्र्यशक्ति का साक्षात्कार हो जाये वही तत्त्व दृष्टि से मोक्ष कहलाता है। तन्त्रालोक में इन्हों ने ही कहा कि "मोक्षो हि नाम नैवान्यः स्वरूप प्रथंन हि" अर्थात मोक्ष (Liberation) कुछ नहीं है अपितु अपने ही सत्यस्वरूप को पहचानना मोक्ष है। अत : यह सिद्ध होता है कि जिस अवस्था में ज्ञानरूप क्रिया और क्रियारूप ज्ञान का पूरा तालमेल रहे उसी को शैव आचार्यों ने मोक्ष के नाम से अलंकृत किया है। इस पारमार्थिक मोक्षदशा का स्वरूप व्युत्थान में और समाधि में एक जैसा रहता है। वह चाहे समाधि में ज्ञानदशा में ठहरे या व्युत्थान में क्रिया दशा में रहे, वस्तुतः वह मुक्त ही है। मोक्ष ज्ञानदशा में रहना यदि समझ लिया जाये जैसे अन्य दर्शनों की धारणा है क्रिया दशा में उसका अभाव होगा अतः यथार्थ में मोक्ष वही है जो बाह्य दशा और अन्तर्मुख में भी स्थायी रूप से बना रहे।

संसार और मोक्षकी बात तो यहां छिड़ी और यह स्पष्ट हुआ कि शैव दृष्टि से सुख दुःख तथा मोह चक्र में फंसना तथा जन्म मृत्यु का शिकार होना संसार है और इस चक्र से छूटकर वास्तविक स्वरूप स्थित होना मोक्ष है। एवं संसार का मुख्य कारण अज्ञान है और ज्ञान मोक्ष का कारण है। अज्ञान शैवाचार्यों ने दो भागो में बांटा है पहिला बौद्ध अज्ञान है और दूसरा पौरूष अज्ञान। बौद्ध अज्ञान मनुष्य की बुद्धि में ठहरा रहता है जिस कारण उसकी बुद्धि संकुचित बनी रहती है और वह यह जान नही सकता कि ग्राह्य क्या है अग्राह्य क्या है।

वह केवल सांसारिक सुख दुःख आदि भोगों में फंसा रहता है। पौरूष अज्ञान मनुष्य को अपने स्वरूप ज्ञान से दूर रखता है। अर्थात् जब वह अनुसन्धान परायण होता है या दैनिक अभ्यास करने बैठता है उस का मन कदापि सावधान नहीं होता केवल इधर–उधर के संकल्प विकल्पों में फिरता रहता है। इन दो प्रकार के अज्ञानों को शैवशास्त्रों ने 'मल' के नाम से पुकारा है।

'मलमज्ञानमिच्छन्ति संसाराकुंरकारणम्' अर्थात् अज्ञान मल है जो संसार के अकुंर का कारण माना जाता है। यही मल आणवमल है जो मायीयमल और कार्ममल का कारण है। यह आणवमल क्या है? शैवशास्त्रों में कहा है कि आणव मल के होने से मन के स्वरूप में अपूर्णता प्रकट होती है जिस कारण वह नाना प्रकार की अभिलाषाओं का शिकार हो जाता है और कदापि स्वरूप साक्षात्कार पा नहीं सकता, इसी आणवमल की स्थिरता से उस की आत्मा में अलग अलग पदार्थों का ज्ञान होता है अर्थात् भेद भाव का उदय होता है। इसी भिन्नवेघप्रथा को मायीयमल कहते हैं। इस मायीय मल से अन्तःकरणों में शुभ अशुभ वासना पैदा होती है इसी वासना को आचार्यो ने कार्म मल कहा है। इस प्रकार आणवमल ही मायीयमल और कार्म मल का मूल कारण है। अज्ञान की तरह ज्ञान के भी दो प्रकार माने गये है–बौद्धज्ञान और पौरूष ज्ञान। बौद्धज्ञान के फलस्वरूप साधक का मन शैवशास्त्रों से सुगन्धित होता है और वह वास्तविक स्थिति से परिचित होता है और उसकी बुद्धि का पूर्ण विकास होता है। अतः इस बौद्ध ज्ञान की प्राप्ति का साधन अद्वैत शैवशास्त्रों का अध्ययन और मनन है जिससे वह यह समझ लेता है कि ग्राहय क्या है और त्याज्य क्या है? पर यह न समझ लेना कि इस ज्ञान के पश्चात् ही उसे स्वरूप साक्षात्कार होगा। यह ज्ञान बुद्धि विकास का उपाय है। दूसरे प्रकार का ज्ञान पौरूषज्ञान है जिसकी प्राप्ति सद्गुरू के कहे हुए मार्ग का अनुसरण करने से होती है और उसे वास्तविक स्थिति का अनुभव होता है ओर चिदानन्द सत्ता की प्राप्ति भी सुगम बनती है। इस ज्ञान संपत्ति से शोभित साधक ही मुक्त कहा जा सकता है। अतः मुक्ति के लिए बौद्ध ज्ञान की अपेक्षा पौरूष ज्ञान

की ही आवश्यकता होती है क्योंकि निरा बौद्धज्ञान मुक्ति साधक नहीं पर निरा पौरूष ज्ञान मुक्ति का साधक है। यदि दोनों किसी साधक में हो वह सोने पर सुहागा सा होता है। स्मरण रहे मेरे सद्‌गुरू ईश्वर स्वरूप स्वामी लक्ष्मण जी महाराज बौद्ध ज्ञान और पौरूष ज्ञान की एक मात्र प्रति मूर्ति थे। अतः वे साधक अपने आप को धन्य समझे जिन्हें उन का साक्षात्कार हुआ है। इसी आशय से शास्त्र में कहा है कि :–

"श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठं गुरूमुपासीत", अर्थात् श्रोत्रिय बौद्ध ज्ञान से युक्त और ब्रह्मनिष्ठ पौरूष ज्ञान सम्पन्न गुरू का ही सेवन करना चाहिए। ऐसा ही गुरू अपने शिष्य को स्वात्म साक्षात्कार कराने में या अकृत्रिम अहं विमर्श का प्रत्यभिज्ञान कराने में समर्थ होता है।

इसी वास्तविक मोक्षदशा को पाने के लिए शैवशास्त्रों में आध्यात्मिक अनुशासन की आवश्यकता पर बहुत बल दिया है। इस अनुशासन का नाम उपाय या योग दिया गया है जो तीन रूपों में विभक्त है। पहला उपाय आणव उपाय है दूसरा उपाय शाक्तोपाय है और तीसरा उपाय शाम्भव उपाय है।

आणवोपाय के विषय में कहा गया है कि :–

उच्चारकरणध्यानवर्णस्थानप्रकल्पनैः।
यो भवेत्स समावेशः सम्यगाणव उच्यते।।

अर्थात उच्चार, करण, ध्यान वर्णोपासना और स्थान कल्पना से जिस समावेश की प्रप्ति होती है उसे आणवोपाय कहते हैं। यह आणवोपाय 'अणु' जीव से और उस जीव के द्वारा अज्ञान से मुक्त होने के लिए की गई साधना से सम्बन्ध रखता है। यह उपाय अवर कोटि का प्रयास है जिस में उच्चार आदि पांच विधियों का उल्लेख किया गया है। उच्चार का तात्पर्य है कि जब साधक प्राणाभ्यास में लीन रहता है। अर्थात स्थूल प्राण का व्यापार उच्चार है। यह प्राण आदि की वृत्तियों के रूप में प्रकट होता है। शरीर के अंगों को किसी विशेष प्रकार की स्थिति में रखना करण है। साकार स्वरूप में मन की एकग्रता को ध्यान कहते हैं। मण्डल निर्माण, मन्दिर या मूर्ति चित्र आदि की रचना को स्थान कल्पना कहते हैं। प्राण के उच्चार के साथ स्वाभाविकरूप से बोले जाने वाले 'स' और 'ह' को 'वर्ण' कहते हैं। ये सारे विकल्पात्मक स्थूल उपाय आणव उपाय के अन्तर्गत हैं। इस आणव उपाय को क्रियोपाय भी कहते हैं। क्योंकि यह वह उपाय है जो क्रिया में पाया जाता है। शाक्तोपाय के विषय में मालिनीविजयोत्तर तंत्र में कहा है कि :–

उच्चार रहिंतं वस्तु चेतसैव विचिन्तयन्।
यं समावेशं आपन्ोति शाक्तः सोऽत्राभिधीयते।।

जब साधक उच्चार करण आदि व्यापारों का शोधनकर इन सब में स्वात्म स्वरूप का ही दर्शन करने लगता है तो उसके मन में विश्व अहन्ता का विकास होता है। वह यह जान लेता है कि सारा जगत मेरा ही स्वरूप है मेरे शुद्ध स्वरूप से भिन्न कुछ नहीं। इस समावेश को शाक्तोपाय या ज्ञानोपाय कहते हैं। शाम्भव उपाय तीसरा उपाय है इसकी परिभाषा मालिनीविजय में दी गई हैं। "अकिंचित चिन्तकस्यैव गुरूणा प्रतिबोधत जायते यः समावेशः शाम्भवीऽसावुदीरितः" अपने चित्त को सर्व विचारों से शून्य करके निर्विकल्प शून्य स्थिति में समाहित करने के प्रयास को शाम्भव उपाय कहते हैं। शाम्भव उपाय सभी उपायों में से श्रेष्ट और दुर्लभ है। शाम्भव योगी को दो निर्विकल्पावस्थों में रहकर न कहीं प्रस्थान ही करना है न कुछ करना है। यह दशा अन्तिम चरण है। ऐसा योगी जिस की इच्छा करता है उसे पाता है, जहां पहुंचना चाहता है वहां उपस्थित होता है। शाम्भवोपाय में त्रिक शैव योगी अनवरत विंकल्प शून्यता को संजोये हुए विश्व का अनुभव करता है। ऐसा सिद्ध करके उसे अन्य किसी वस्तु की आवश्यकता नहीं रहती। स्वामी जी महाराज कहा करते थे कि इस अवस्था में आरूढ़ योगी के लिए शिव समरसता की प्राप्ति स्वचालित होती है। शाम्भवोपाय को इच्छोपाय के नाम से भी पुकारते क्योंकि इसका प्रादुर्भाव इच्छा शक्ति से ही होता है। यह वह उपाय है जो उपेयावस्था में स्थित है। इस उपाय में साधक केवल अपने सद्गुरू में विलीनहोकर अपनी सत्ता को खो बैठता है। तंत्रालोक में कहा है कि :–

"स्वमुक्ति मात्रे कस्यापि यावद्विश्व विमोचने।
प्रतिभोदेति खद्योतरत्नतारेन्दु सूर्यवत्"।।

अर्थात जुगनू केवल अपने लिए चमकता है। रत्न न केवल अपने लिए चमकते हैं पर कई अन्य लोगों के लिए भी। तारों का क्षेत्र इसे भी अधिक विस्तृत है। चन्द्रमा का प्रकाश क्षेत्र तारों से भी महान है और भगवान भास्कर सारे विश्व के लिए प्रकाशित होते हैं। इसी प्रकार से शाम्भवोपाय में परिनिष्ठित योगी मध्याह्न काल के सूर्य की तरह सारे विश्व को प्रकाशित करते हैं।

यहां इस बात का उल्लेख करना अप्रासंगिक नहीं होगा कि भगवान गोपीनाथ जी इसी शाम्भवोपाय में परिनिष्ठित थे। जैसे मैंने पहले कहा कि इस प्राकर का योगी जो चाहे, जहां जाना चाहे सब कुछ कर सकता है। इसी सत्य के सहारे सेना के बहुत सारे आफिसरों ने तथा सेनानियों ने भारत पाक युद्ध में भगवान गोपीनाथ 'बब'

को मोर्चा सम्भाले अपनी आंखों से देखा था जब कि उनका पार्थिव शरीर अपनी कुटिया में यथावत् निश्चेष्ट था। इस सत्य का साक्षात्कार भारतीय सेना के उन सेनानियों ने किया जब अकस्मात उन्होंने 'बब' के दर्शन किये। इसी प्रकार की बहुत सारी घटनायें हैं जिनका ब्योरेवार वर्णन करना कठिन काम है।

इन तीन उपायों से परे शैवदर्शन ने एक अन्य उपाय का उल्लेख किया है जिसका नाम अनुपाय है। अर्थात अनुपाय जो कोई उपाय नहीं है। विकल्पशून्यता शाम्भवोपाय है, चितैकाग्रता शाक्तोपाय है, मन्त्रों आदि के सहारे एकाग्रता को पाना और प्राणाभ्यास में तत्पर रहना आणवोपाय है। पर अनुपाय में साधक केवल परखता है (observe) करता है पर क्रिया शून्य रहता है। कर्म करके भी कर्म के साथ उसका सम्बन्ध नहीं है। अनुपाय भगवान शिव की आनन्दशक्ति के साथ सम्बद्ध है।

इस प्रकार कश्मीर शैवदर्शन की कुछेक प्रमुख विशेषताओं पर मैंने अपने सद्गुरू महाराज के मुखारविन्द से समय समय पर उद्भूत सत्याशों के आधार पर जो कुछ आप भक्तजनों, विद्वानों, साहित्यकारों और आलोचकों के सम्मुख कहा, मुझे पूर्ण आशा है कि इससे कुछ न कुछ स्वात्मज्ञान की ज्योति को प्रज्वलित करने की प्रेरणा उन्हें अवश्य होगी। यदि ऐसा होगा तो मैं अपने को कृतकृत्य समझूंगा।

जय गुरूदेव।

सन्त कवि : मास्टर ज़िन्द कौल

–प्रो॰ भूषणलाल कौल

कश्मीरी भाषा में लिखित भक्ति काव्य के इतिहास में मास्टर ज़िन्द कौल का योगदान अभूतपूर्व है। 20वीं शताब्दी के पाँचवें दशक में जब कश्मीरी भाषा में लौकिक श्रृंगार, राष्ट्र प्रेम एवं देश भक्ति से सम्बधिंत रचनाएं प्रमुख रूप से लिखी जाती थी मास्टर जी ने युगीन काव्य धारा के प्रवाह में न बह कर श्रद्धा एवं प्रेम के समन्वित रूप अर्थात भक्ति से ओत प्रोत रचनाएँ लिखीं। भक्ति काव्य की एक स्वस्थ परम्परा हमें कश्मीरी भाषा के सहित्य में देखने को मिलती है। लल्लेश्वरी के समय अर्थात् १४वीं शताब्दी से वर्तमान समय तक अनेक प्रतिभासम्पन्न भक्त कवियों ने इस काव्य प्रवृत्ति के विकास में अपना महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। मास्टर जी इसी परम्परा के अन्तिम हस्ताक्षर हैं जिन के द्वारा वर्तमान शताब्दी के वैचारिक घटाटोप में आध्यात्मिक चिन्तन मानसिक शान्ति की उपलब्धि हेतु एक सशक्त साधन के रूप में व्यवहृत हुआ है।

एक निम्न मध्यवर्गीय कश्मीरी पण्डित परिवार में ज़िन्द कौल का जन्म १७ जुलाई सन् 1884 ई॰ को हुआ। इन के पिता स्वर्गीय लक्ष्मण जू कौल कस्बा शिहिलटेंग श्रीनगर में रहते थे। माँ का नाम था पझावती जिन का देहान्त युवावस्था में ही हुआ था। बाल्य काल में ही उन्होंने उर्दू, फारसी और अग्रंजी भाषाओं का अध्ययन आरम्भ किया। सन् 1902 ई॰ में मैट्रिक की परीक्षा पास की और श्रीनगर में पुराने फ़तेहकदल के निकट 'हिन्दू स्कूल' नामक एक प्राईवेट शिक्षण संस्था में अध्यापक नियुक्त हुए। कालान्तर में राज्य के शिक्षा विभाग में उन की नियुक्ति अध्यापक के रूप में हुई। सन् 1915 में उन्होंने बी॰ ए॰ की परीक्षा पास की। सन् 1924 में राज्य के 'पुरातत्त्व एवं अनुसन्धान विभाग' में शोध सहायक (Research Assistant) के रूप में उन की नियुक्ति हुई और फिर कुछ समय तक सचिवालय में प्रसार–विभाग में अनुवादक के रूप में काम करते रहे। सन् 1940 में सरकारी नौकरी से सेवानिवृत्त हुए। पुन : कुछ समय तक उन्होंने हब्बाकदल–श्रीनगर में स्थित 'वसन्ता गर्लस हाई स्कूल' में अध्यापन कार्य किया। पण्डित ज़िन्द कौल कसबा घाटी के एक नामवर शिक्षक थे। उन्हें कई भाषाओं की सम्यक जानकारी थी। फारसी, उर्दू और हिन्दी के साथ–साथ अंग्रेजी भाषा पर भी असाधारण अधिकार प्राप्त था। 'सुमरन' (स्मरण) में संगृहीत कविताओं के अंग्रेजी अनुवाद पढ़कर मास्टर जी के अंग्रेजी भाषाज्ञान का बोध हो जाता है। 'इतिहास' उनका प्रिय विषय

रहा है। भारतीय इतिहास विशेषकर कश्मीर के प्राचीन इतिहास पर उन की नज़र बहुत गहरी थी। यही कारण है कि अपने शिष्यो में वे पर्याप्त लोकप्रिय रहे और समकालीन बुद्धिजीवी यहां तक कि शासनाधिकारी भी उन का सम्मान करते थे। लोग उन्हें अदब से 'मास्टर जी' कहते थे और इसी नाम से पण्डित ज़िन्द कौल कस्बा साहित्य जगत में अमर हुए।

मास्टर जी गृहस्थी थे। उन की पत्नी का नाम था सिद्धलक्ष्मी। उन के दो पुत्र थे। जानकी नाथ एवं जगन्नाथ। ज्येष्ठ पुत्र जानकीनाथ जवांमर्ग हुए। यह मास्टर जी के जीवन की सब से बड़ी दुर्घटना है। कहते हैं कि मास्टर जी अपने बेटे के मृत शरीर के निकट आकर यह कहते हुए कि 'क्यों बबुआ! और कोई उपाय नही था ? मौन हो गये और मृत्यु संस्कार की समाप्ति तक मौन रहे। मास्टर जी के व्यक्तित्व की सब से बड़ी विशेषता है आत्म सन्तोष। वे शाकाहारी थे। कभी क्रोध नही करते। अपने आप पर जबरदस्त नियत्रंण था और कभी बेकार नही बैठते। अपने शिष्यों तथा साथियों को नवीन रचनाएँ पढ़ने के लिये निरन्तर प्रोत्साहित करते और स्वयं उनके लिये नवीन प्रकाशित पुस्तके ढूँढ कर लाते ओर यह कह कर कि 'दिस विल स्यूट यू' अध्ययन के लिये प्रेरित करते थे।[1]

मास्टर जी आरम्भ में फारसी, उर्दू और हिन्दी में कवितायें लिखते रहे। घाटी के एक सम्मानित चिकित्सक डॉ॰ श्यामसुन्दर फोतेदार को समर्पित इन की हिन्दी कविताओं का प्रथम संग्रह 'पत्र-पुष्प' शीर्षक से सन् 1911 ई॰ में कश्मीर मरकंटाईल प्रेस से प्रकाशित हुआ। उर्दू, फारसी में वे साबित कविनाम से रचनाएँ लिखते थे। जनवरी सन् 1966 ई॰ में मास्टर जी के एक शिष्य श्री अर्जुन नाथ रैणा द्वारा सम्पादित 'दीवान साबित' शीर्षक से इन की फ़ारसी ओर उर्द् रचनाओं का एक संग्रह प्रकाशित हुआ। मई सन् 1951 ई॰ में मास्टर जी ने 'सुमरन' शीर्षक से अपनी कश्मीरी कविताओं का संग्रह देवनागरी लिपि में दो भागों में प्रकाशित कराया। 52 पृष्ठों का प्रथम भाग मई सन् 1951 ई॰ में 'कृष्णा प्रेस' श्रीनगर से प्रकाशित हुआ ओर 64 पृष्ठों का द्वितीय भाग अगस्त सन् 1951 में 'कश्मीर स्टंडर्ड प्रेस' श्रीनगर से प्रकाशित हुआ। बाद में जुलाई सन् 1955 ई॰ में दोनों भागों को मिलाकर फारसी लिपि में अंग्रेज़ी अनुवाद के साथ 'लालारूख' प्रकाशन संस्था (श्रीनगर) के द्वारा 'नार्मल

1. श्री मोहन कृष्ण तिक्कू कश्मीर घाटी के एक प्रसिद्ध केसर-व्यापारी हैं। उन की दुकान हब्बाकदल के पास है और उन के परिवार के साथ मास्टर जी के गहरे सम्बन्ध रहे हैं। मैं ने 25-04-1986 को उन से मिल कर मास्टर जी के विषय में पर्याप्त जानकारी प्राप्त की। इतना ही नहीं बल्कि 'दीवान साबित' एवं 'पत्र पुष' नामक अलभ्य पुस्तकें भी उन से प्राप्त हुई जिन की फोटोस्टेट कापियाँ आज भी मेरे पास सुरक्षित हैं। मैं श्री मोहन कृष्ण तिक्कू का विशेष रूप से आभारी हूँ।

प्रेस' श्रीनगर से 'सुमरन' का प्रकाशन हुआ और सन् 1956 ई० में इन्हें साहित्य अकादमी के पुरस्कार से सम्मानित किया गया। मास्टर जी कश्मीरी भाषा के पहले कवि हैं जो अकादमी से पुरस्कृत हुए।

कश्मीरी भाषा में मास्टर जी का काव्य लेखन सन् 1942 ई० में शुरू होता है और सन् 1954-55 तक वे बराबर लिखते रहे। इस के बाद इन्होंने कुछ नहीं लिखा है। इन तेरह–चौदह वर्षो में ही मास्टर जी ने कश्मीरी भाषा में रचनाएँ लिखीं और उस के बाद चुप्पी साधली।

मास्टर जी के एक शिष्य आलीकदल श्रीनगर के निवासी श्री जानकी नाथ बख्शी ने 'माई टू मास्टर्स' (मास्टर ज़िन्द कौल मास्टर शंकर पण्डित) शीर्षक से एक पुस्तक अंग्रेजी भाषा में लिखी है जिस में उन्होंने घाटी के इन नामवर गुरुजनों के व्यक्तित्व एवं कृतित्व पर प्रकाश डाला है। कश्मीर के एक बहुचर्चित लेखक श्री पी० एन० बज़ाज के साथ भी मास्टर जी के अच्छे सम्बंध थे। श्री मोहन कृष्ण तिक्कू से मुझे ज्ञात हुआ कि प्रायः श्री पी० एन० बज़ाज मास्टर जी के पास आते और अपनी रचनाओं के विषय में उन से परामर्श लेते[1]। इतना ही नहीं, मास्टर जी उन की रचनाओं की पाण्डुलिपियाँ पढ़कर उनमें आवश्यकतानुसार फेर–बदल भी कर देते थे।

जीवन के अन्तिम दिनों में मास्टर जी काफी रोगग्रस्त रहे। अपने संघर्षशील जीवन में वह निरन्तर विपरीत परिस्थितियों से जूझते रहे लेकिन जब ऊपर का बुलावा आ पहुँचा तो काया सुन्न पड़ गई और कारागार में बन्धी प्रिया ने अपने पिया के साथ पुनः सम्बन्ध जोड़ लिया। मास्टर जी का स्वर्गवास 4 अप्रैल सन् 1966 ई० को जम्मू में हुआ।

मास्टर जी को भक्ति के किसी विशिष्ट सम्प्रदाय अथवा वर्ग के साथ बान्धना उचित नहीं होगा। उन्होंने सतत चिन्तन के आधार पर परमसत्ता को पहचान अथवा अनुभव करने का प्रयास किया है। इस दृष्टि से वे एक समन्वयकारी लेखक, विचारक थे जिन्होंने निर्गुण एंव सगुण, ज्ञान एवं भक्ति तथा लौकिक एवं अलौकिक का परस्पर समन्वय करके उस अज्ञात सत्ता के रहस्य को समझने और तत्पश्चात् व्यक्त करने का प्रयास किया है।

मास्टर जी भारतीय धर्म, दर्शन एवं प्राचीन इतिहास से भली भाँति परिचित थे। वह कई भाषाओं के ज्ञाता थे। विभिन्न भक्ति आन्दोलनों की उन्हें सम्यक् जानकारी थी, यही कारण है कि वर्षों का चिन्तन–मनन एवं गहन अध्ययन उन के भक्ति गीतों को वैचारिक गरिमा प्रदान करता हैं। यहाँ अन्ध श्रद्धा नहीं अपितु विचार

---

1. २५–४–१९८६ को लेखक श्री तिक्कु से मिले थे।

एवं तर्क भक्ति को ज्ञान की महिमा से मंडित करते हैं। वह सगुण से अधिक निर्गुण के प्रति आकृष्ट हैं यही कारण है कि सूफियों का प्रेम मार्ग उन्हें अपनी ओर आकर्षित करता है।

मास्टर जी का विचार है कि यह समस्त जगत् ब्रह्म की लीला है। एक से अनेक होने की इच्छा का प्रतिफलन। वस्तुतः वही अलौकिक सौन्दर्य पुंज सीमित बन्धनों में बन्ध कर सत्य और तथ्य की धूमिल छाया में जीव को सच्चे प्रेम की खोज में भटकाता है। मूल सूत्रधार तो कोई और ही है, जीव नट–नटी के समान इस विश्व के रंगमंच पर कुछ क्षणों के लिये उपस्थित होकर अपने अस्तित्व का आभास दिलाते हैं:–

राजा[1] अपने देश से निकल कर
खेलन हेतु यहाँ आये हैं।
मानो मन–मुदित मयूर है
नृत्य लीला में मग्न,
खेलन हेतु यहाँ आये हैं।
अपने घर के सुख भोग त्याग कर
यात्रा की ज़िम्मेदारी लेली
परमधाम पर 'तोर'[2] चढ़ा कर
खेलन हेतु यहाँ आये हैं[3]।

भक्त अपने लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति के हेतु सदा छटपटाता है। वह अपने अस्तित्व को प्रिय के अस्तित्व में विलीन करके बूदँ और सागर के अन्तर को मिटा देना चाहता

---

1. परमात्मा
2. 'तोर' कश्मीरी शब्द है जो लकड़ी को चुटखनी के अर्थ में व्यवहार में लाया जाता है। द्वार के दो कपाट बन्द करने के लिये बीच में 'तोर' लगाया जाता है।
3. 'राज़ि' पनिने देशि द्रामुत योर आमुत गिन्दने अच़नस ज़न मोर आमुत योर आमुत गिन्दने
   मटि ह्योतमुत छुस सफ़र त्रऽविथ गरुक आराम प्रंग
   तथ बरस दिथ तोर आमुत योर आमुत गिन्दने।
   'सुमरन' मास्टर जिन्द कौल लालारुख प्रकाशन, श्रीनगर

है। इस नश्वर शरीर में प्रकाश की एक किरण मानो क़ैद कर दी गई है जो सदा उस प्रकाश पुंज में लय होने के लिये व्याकुल और अधीर दिखाई देती है। वस्तुतः भवसागर को पार करने के लिये अपने आप को पहचानना नितान्तावश्यक है। माँझी तो पार उतारने के लिये नाव ले कर खड़ा चिल्ला रहा है लेकिन उस नाव में बैठने की योग्यता और क्षमता हर एक में नहीं है। तभी तो मांझी कहता है :—

घर गृहस्थी के सुख साधन जुटाते
तबाह हो गये, नष्ट हुए
थक कर टूट चुके हो।
घर तो यही रहेगा
व्यर्थ है इस को भरना
खाली पार उतरते जाओ
चाहता कोई पार उतरना[1]।

प्रकृति के नाना सौन्दर्य चित्र मास्टर जी को निरन्तर अपनी ओर आकर्षित करते हैं। उन का भावुक हृदय इन दृश्य चित्रों पर मोहित है पर साथ ही साथ चिन्तनशील मस्तिष्क प्रकृति वैभव में विराट् सत्ता की अद्भुत छवि से सक्रिय हो उठता है। कश्मीर में भारी हिमपात का दृश्य पर्याप्त आकर्षक होता है। श्वेत चादर ओढ़े प्रकृति को देख कर कवि वस्तुतः द्वैत में अद्वैत का व्यापक प्रसार पाता है। अपनी मौलिक चिन्तना के आधार पर अद्भुत दृश्य के सहारे गूढ़ तथ्य को अभिव्यक्त करते हुए वह इसे दिव्य दर्शन के रूप में ग्रहण करता है। प्रकृति के एक विशेष रमणीय दृश्य के द्वारा रहस्यानुभूति की अभिव्यक्ति मास्टर जी की मौलिक उद्भावना है। 'समता का सन्देश' देने के हेतु प्रकृति का यह लावण्यमय रूप उन्हें निरन्तर प्रेरित करता है। हृदय के व्यापार में बुद्धि (विचार) का अद्भुत संगम होने पर सामान्य दृश्य चित्र भी महिमामंडित हो जाता है।

---

1. गरवेट सोम्बरान छिव मारऽ गा'मऽत्य
छ्यनिथ त थकित प्यमुति।
घरऽ रोज़ि यती त कथ क्युत भरिव
छ़री तरिव अपोर, कांह मा स तरिव अपोर'

'सुमरन' कविता

हिमपात–
मानो प्रकृति ने श्वेत चादर ओढ़ी
चान्दनी ने फर्श बिछाया।
रूई के गालों के तले धरती के ऊबड़ खाबड़ भाग
हो गये सम
एहसास दिलाया
सुन्दर और स्वच्छ होने का
कुरूप और मैले को।
प्रकृति का पर्वतीय और समतल भाग
एक ही दस्त्र का मानो है
गिरेबान और दामन
हिमपात
ऐसी वर्षा अनुग्रह की
एक ही दिव्य रूप का हो प्रत्यक्ष बोध
द्वैत को मिटा कर अद्वैत की स्थापना
सोना जागना, जन्म–मरण और आना–जाना
अन्दर–बाहर, अपना–पराया प्रेम रसमें
सब हो जाते एक, परस्पर सम।
हिमपात
मानो प्रकृति ने श्वेत चादर ओढी
चान्दनी ने फर्श बिछाया[1]।

मास्टर जी का विचार है कि सृष्टि में सर्वत्र परस्पर दो विरोधी तत्त्वों अथवा शक्तियों के योग से विकास का पथ प्रशस्त हो जाता है। पुरूष के साथ स्त्री, प्रकाश के साथ अन्धकार, जन्म के साथ मृत्यु, फूल के साथ काँटे और हासविलास के साथ अश्रुकण मिल कर जीवन की सार्थकता सिद्ध करते हैं। एक के बिना दूसरे का अस्तित्व

---

1. 'शीना वालुन त जून गाशू फरशा त्रवुन
सन्यर त वोग्न्यर फंबि तूदन तल व्यपरावुन
खरवुन त मलकूत कूत सोन्दर त प्रोन बासनावुन
अकी जामुक नाल दोलु बाल पाथुल हावुन।
अनुग्रह वरशुन हावि यिथ दिव्य दरशुन कुनुई
द्वैत गालिथ एक रस थावि पथकुन कुनुई
वुजुन त शोंगुन, ज्योन मरून युन त गछुन कुनुई
अन्दर त न्यबर प्रेममय पर त पनुन कुनुई।

निरर्थक हो जाता है विकास की इस प्रक्रिया में दोनों अपनी अपनी भूमिका निबाहते हैं, यही नहीं अपितु निबाहने के लिये विवश हो जाते हैं। प्रकृति का कण कण चुम्बकीय आकर्षण से युक्त है। जहाँ वैज्ञानिक अथवा तर्कशास्त्री सिद्धान्त अथवा तर्क के आधार पर इस की व्याख्या करते हैं वहाँ रहस्यवादी चिन्तक विराट की इच्छा का स्वाभाविक परिणाम समझ कर इसे दैव–लीला का व्यावहारिक रूप मानता है। देखना यह है कि इस सृष्टि पर दो विरोधी तत्त्वों के परस्पर आकर्षण से विकास की सम्भावना किस प्रकार सार्थक हो जाती है। यदि तनिक शान्त मन से विचार किया जाये तो यह बात स्पष्ट होती है कि झूठ के बिना सत्य का, श्याम के बिना श्वेत का जड़ के बिना चेतन का विनाश के बिना सृष्टि का, दुख के बिना सुख का, वैर के बिना सद्भाव का यहाँ तक कि शैतान के बिना फरिश्ते का कोई महत्त्व नही। एक की पहचान दूसरे के बिना सम्भव नहीं। सृष्टि व्यापार के इस रहस्य को मास्टर जी बड़ी सादगी और सहजता के साथ बरतन और ढक्कन के पारस्परिक सम्बन्ध द्वारा व्यक्त करते हैं :–

व्यर्थ है बरतन बिना ढक्कन के
बेमानी है ढक्कन बिना बरतन के
वही परमतत्त्व परमात्मा
विरोधी युग्मों में व्यक्त हुए हैं,
आये हैं खेल खेलने इस जग में[1]।

'खेल खेलने आये हैं, यहाँ यह कोई विवशता नहीं थी उन के लिये। यह तो आनन्द का प्रसार है। प्रकृति के कण कण का सजग हो कर आनन्द विभोर हो उठना ही तो जीवन की सार्थकता है। एक से अनेक बनकर कहीं वह विभूतियों के रूप में प्रातः स्मरणीय बन जाता है तो कहीं सामान्य जन का रूप धारण कर महान विभूतियों के महत्त्व को रेखांकित करते हुए उन के जीवन की सार्थकता को सिद्ध करता है। मास्टर जी को भारतीय संस्कृति के प्रति अनन्य अनुराग है। वस्तुतः उन की चिन्तन पद्धति का विकास भारतीय संस्कृति की दृढ़ भित्ति पर ही हुआ है। वे अपने आप को इस विरासत से जुदा नहीं रख सके। भारत का महिमामय अतीत ही उन का प्रेरणा स्रोत रहा है। गौतम बुद्ध का अहिंसात्मक दृष्टिकोण, शंकराचार्य का अद्वैत सिद्धान्त एवं टैगोर का बहुआयामी व्यक्तित्व प्रकाश स्तम्भ बन कर उन

1. –'ठानऽ रोस्तुई बानऽ पलज्या बानि रोस्तुई ठानऽ क्या
कुन बनित यिम जोर आमुत योर आमुत गिन्दने।'

'सुमरन'–कविता 'रज़ि' – पृ॰ १०

के विचार पथ को आलोकित करता है। लेकिन यह सत्य है कि हर रूप में उसे विश्वनियंता ही क्रीड़ारत दिखाई देते हैं।

'कहीं प्रकट हुए बन कर टैगोर
तो कहीं शंकराचार्य और बुद्ध
कहीं प्रकट हम जैसे नादानों में
आये हैं खेल खेलने इस जग में[1]

भक्त अपने इष्ट को पाने के लिये लालायित है। वह सगुण रूप में अपने प्रिय का साक्षात्कार पाना चाहता है। इस उद्देश्य की प्राप्ति के हेतु वह नवधा भक्ति के प्रत्येक रूप को अपनाने के लिये कटिबद्ध है। वियोग उसे सहय नहीं। भक्त अपने भीतर के मैल को धो कर अर्थात दुई के भाव को मिटा कर तथा सत–संग का सहारा लेकर अपने प्रिय को पाने के हेतु प्रतीक्षारत है। यही प्रतीक्षा की घड़ियां कहर बनकर सौ–सौ परीक्षाओं की स्थिति में से गुज़रने के लिये भक्त को विवश करती है :–

'नित इष्टदेव के चरण कमलों पर
मोहित भँवरा बन कर
मदिरा पान करता जा,
मेरे योगीराज !
भक्तजनों में वितरित करते
ईश प्रसाद को सत्–जन
पीते और पिलाते हैं
प्रेम मदिरा परस्पर,
मेरे योगीराज[2] !

मास्टर जी कश्मीर के शैव दर्शन एवं ऋषि सम्प्रदाय से पर्याप्त प्रभावित थे। इस के साथ ही साथ वेदान्त, वैष्णव सम्प्रदाय, विभिन्न भक्ति आन्दोलनों एवं सूफ़ी सन्तों के तसव्वुफ ने उन की चिन्तन पद्धति को एक सुनिश्चित दिशा प्रदान की शिव और वैष्णव दोनों समान रूप से उन्हें प्रिय हैं। उन के भक्ति काव्य में प्रेम की महिमा सर्वोपरि रही है। प्रेम ही ईश्वर का रूप है और समस्त मानसिक शक्तियों का मूल उद्देश्य है– प्रेम के प्रभाव को गहराने में समुचित योगदान प्रदान करना।

---

1. कुनि सुई टैगोर आमुत शंकराचार्य त बौद्ध, कुनि असि हयू चोर आमुत योर आमुत गिन्दने।
2. नित इष्टदीव सन्दयन पम्पोश पादनी तल, बोम्बुर बनिथ चवान गछ मस म्यानि जूगरायो, दयिसुन्द प्रसाद सत्‌जन बख्तयन छि बागरावान, लोलुक चवान त चावान मस म्यानि जूगरायो।

आध्यात्मिक प्रेम की उष्णता से प्रेरित हो कर वे विरक्त अवस्था में गुफाओं और कन्दराओं की शरण जाने की बात नहीं कहते अपितु लौकिक प्रेम की स्नेहल ज्योति से आध्यात्मिक प्रेम का दीप प्रज्वलित करना चाहते हैं। विरह–दग्ध प्रियतमा अपने मन–मन्दिर में निवास हेतु प्रिय को प्रेमभरा आग्रह पूर्ण निमंत्रण इस प्रकार देती है :

प्रतिक्षण करते प्रिय का ध्यान
क्या है ज़रूरत ?
गार–गुफाओं में जाने की
मेरा मन–मन्दिर तो उपयुक्त होगा
एकान्तवास के हेतु।
प्रिय मेरे !
तुझे रखूंग छिपा कर उस में[1]।

मास्टर जी के भक्ति काव्य में संसार त्याग का कोई महत्त्व नहीं। शैव–दर्शन से प्रभावित कवि व्यक्त संसार को शिव की लीला समझ कर इस के प्रति प्रेमातिरेक से अधीर हो उठता है। जीवन और जगत के प्रति उन का दृष्टिकोण स्वस्थ स्वीकारात्मक है, रूग्ण नकारात्मक नहीं। परस्पर सद्‌भाव ओर बन्धुत्व को स्थापित करने में ही वे 'लोल' (प्रेम) की सार्थकता सिद्ध करते हैं। कहने का तात्पर्य यह है कि दिव्यानुभूति की प्राप्ति के हेतु लौकिक जीवन बाधक नहीं, साधक है। लौकिक जीवन अलौकिक प्रकाश से ही जगमगा उठता है। इस लौकिक जीवन का अपना महत्त्व है, यह क्षणिक होते हुए भी अनमोल है। यही तो शिव की लीला है इसे ठुकराया तो नहीं जा सकता। वस्तुतः अणु अणु में तो उसी का वास है। यह भौतिक जगत तो उस का व्यक्त रूप है। इस को सुन्दर, ह्रदय ग्राहक और जीवन के योग्य बनाने में 'लोल' (प्रेम) का अपना विशेष महत्त्व है। यही 'लोल' लौकिक धरातल पर जीव को जीने के लिये विवश करता हैं। इस का मूल सूत्र तो स्वयं वह शक्ति पुंज है, उसीसे यह चतुरदिक प्रवाहित होता है और प्रकृति के कण कण को सींच कर पुनः उसी स्रोत–सागर में समा जाता है :–

---

1. गरि गरि करहक च़ टाठि सुन्द ध्यानै
तोति क्याज़ि रटहक गोफि तय ग़ार
मन म्योन करिज़िहे खलवत खानै
चूरि हो थवथ म्यानि जानानै।

'जिस पेड़ को सींचोगे
नमी ज़मीन के भीतर जा पहुँचेगी
जिस ने प्यार किया किसी से
वही तो है ईश के प्रति प्रेमाभिव्यक्ति।
प्यार प्रवाहित है उसी से
पहुँचता चतुरदिक् उसी के पास
बुद्धिमान जब समझ गये इस बात को
मूल तथ्य विदित हुआ उन को[1]।

मास्टर जी के भक्ति काव्य पर तसव्वुफ़ का प्रभाव भी स्पष्ट रूप से पड़ा है। कश्मीर ने महान सूफ़ी कवियों को जन्म दिया है जिन में स्वच्छक्राल, रहमानडार (1875 ई॰), शमस फ़क़ीर (1843,1901 ई॰) वहाब खार (1842,1912 ई॰), वाज़महमूद (1834,1916 ई॰), अहद ज़रगर (1906,1983 ई॰) एवं समदमीर (1894,1959) उल्लेखनीय हैं। अपने समकालीन सूफ़ी कवियों के लौकिक–अलौकिक प्रेम की परस्पर लुका–छिपी के खेल से वे आनन्द विभोर हो उठे हैं। उन का विरह सतंप्त हृदय प्रिय मिलन के हेतु व्याकुंल है और उनके हृदय की यह व्याकुलता स्वाभाविक है जो लौकिक दृष्टि से हीमाल की तड़प, हब्बाखातून की विरह वेदना और अरणिमाल के अश्रुकणों की याद दिलाती है और अलौकिक दृष्टि से माशूक के प्रति आशिक के जुदाई के गम को ताज़ा करती है। मचलती–तड़पती विरह दग्ध विंह्वल नायिका (आशिक) हिमपात को देख कर कराह उठती है। इस कराहती पुकार में जायसी के आशिक की व्यथा, सूर के गोपियों की करूणा और मीरा के हृदय की पीड़ा साकार हो उठी है:–

(उनको –)
'यह अस्तप्राय चांद
मेरी याद दिलाता
अथवा अन्तिम सांसों में
प्रातः कालीन शमअ
मेरे दर्द–जिग्र की दास्तां सुनाता।
ठंड में जो जमगई है कली
मेरी तस्वीर दिखाती उनको,

---

1. 'यस कुलिस सग दिख ज़मीनस वाति स्नेह, लोल येम यस कांसि बोर ताम बोर दयस। लोल तस निश द्राव तस वातान चो़पारि, गाटल्यो यी ज़ोन यिम वातिथ पयस।'

कोई किसी तरह से
मेरी याद दिलाता उनको, जो
हो जाते आकर्षित मेरे प्रति[1]।

वेदना को कवि ने प्रेम के लिये नितान्तावश्यक माना है। इस अग्नि में तप कर ही कांच से कंचन होने की क्षमता का विकास होता है। अन्धकार को देखने के बाद ही प्रकाश का महत्त्व समझा जा सकता है और कड़वे फल को चखने के बाद ही माधुर्य का आनन्द लिया जा सकता है। प्रिय विरह में तड़प तड़प कर एक एक क्षण गुजारने में जो आनन्द है इसकी उपलिब्ध किसी अन्य स्थिति में सम्भव नहीं। 'लोल' (प्रेम) में अश्रु कणों का हास–विलास और माधुर्य–मुसकान से कहीं अधिक मोल है। जिस ने विरह की तड़प को सहन न किया हो भला मिलन की अकुलाहट को वह कया समझे? सूफी काव्य में अलौकिक प्रिय के प्रति इस अकुलाहट को लौकिक धरातल पर प्रतीकों के माध्यम से अभिव्यक्त किया गया है। मिलन की तड़प यहां भी आशिक के मानस को वेदना विह्यल कर देता है। कवि तो मुखर हो उठा है:

'जिस के हेतु नहीं लाजिम हो
व्यथा–वेदना' अश्रु–उंच्छवास
क्या उपलब्ध कहीं है इस जग में
ऐसा लोल (प्रेम)?[2]

आशिक हर स्थिति में अपने भीतर प्रेम की तपन को महसूस करना चाहता है यही तपन तो उसे जीने के लिये विवश कर रही है। साधना पथ पर तो केवल प्रिय स्मृति के सहारे ही विभिन्न अवस्थाओं को पार किया जा सकता है। प्रेम ही ईश्वर है और जीवन की सब से बड़ी उपलब्धि। प्रिय के बिना तो जीवन व्यर्थ है, बेमानी। आशिक़ के लिये जब बिछोह असहनीय हो जाता है तो वह हल्का–मीठा रोष भरा उलाहना देते हुए परस्पर की दूरी को बांटने की दृढ़ इच्छा दोहराता है:–

---

1. 'वसवुन यि च़न्दरम म्योन च़्यतस पाव्यसनाय
या शमअ सुबहुक सोज़िदिल म्योन बाव्यसनाय
यखबस्ति थ'र नति म्योन तसवीर हाव्यस नाय
कुनि पा'ठि कांछाहं माय–स्रोह वुज़ि नाव्यस नाया।'

'सुमरन'–कविता 'शीनवालुन'

2. 'यथ न लो'ज़िम दोद तय दग ओश तं वोश
छा सना त्युथ लोल सम्सारस अन्दर?

'सुमरन' कविता 'वनन मंज़ लाल'

'दूर रहकर आसमां में
तुम हंसरहे हो देख कर मुझ को
गुप्त हो दास्तानों में
नहीं सहन यह दूरी
लोल (प्रेम) मेरे ! क्षण मात्र भी।[1]

मास्टर जी के भक्तिकाव्य में प्रेम की महत्ता सर्वोपरि है। यहाँ आशिक़ अपने जाने जाना की एक एक अदा पर सौ सौ बार निछावर होने के लिये तत्पर हैं। उसे केवल प्रियदर्शन की लालसा है। साधना के पथ पर अवश्य एक स्थिति ऐसी भी आ पहुँचती है जहाँ साधक अपने मनमीत को अपनी आँखों के सामने साकार रूप में देखकर आश्चर्य चकित होने के साथ–साथ अवाक् रह जाता है। प्रिय के रूप चित्रण से सम्बधित मास्टर जी की एक छायावादी काव्य अभिव्यक्ति विचारणीय है :–

'नाजुक लाल होंठ जब कभी
हंसने के अन्दाज़ में काँप उठते हैं
तो मात खा कर भी शरमा जाती
अनार की पुष्प पंखुरियाँ,
प्राण प्रिय ! कँपा अपने होंठ तनिक'।[2]

सगुण–भक्ति के क्षेत्र में मास्टर जी ने कृष्ण के प्रति तन्मय होकर अपने हृदयोद्‌गार व्यक्त किये हैं। कश्मीर में कृष्ण काव्य की एक स्वस्थ परम्परा देखने को मिलती है और मास्टर जी इसी परम्परा की एक महत्त्वपूर्ण कड़ी है। कृष्ण को कर्म क्षेत्र का मूल प्रेरणा स्रोत मान कर कवि उन के अनुग्रह का प्रसाद पाने के लिये व्याकुल है। भक्त अपने इष्ट के प्रति नतमस्तक होकर तथा युगीन सन्दर्भ को ध्यान में रख कर वैर, लोभ, घृणा और अन्याय रूपी दानव का संहार करने के लिये कृष्ण के उस रूप में प्रकट होने की आशा रखता है जिस रूप में वे महाभारत–युद्ध–पूर्व अर्जुन की किंकर्तव्य विमूढ़ता को भंग करने के लिये प्रकट हुए थे।

तोड़ देगा कमर
कृष्ण अपने चक्र प्रहार से
वैर, लोभ, घृणा तथा अन्याय रूपी दानव की।
दया करेंगे प्रभुवर,
अशक्त, निर्धन एवं असहायजनों पर।

---

1. 'म्य कुन वुछ वुछ असान छुक दूरि रूज़िथ आसामाननमंज, गुपित छुक दास्तानन मंज़ यि दूरयर नो ज़र लोलो'।

2. ज़ाविल वोज़िल वुठ कुनि कुनि आनै, अस्निच त्रायि यलि कुमलान छी, दान पोश बारगन छि मन्दछावानै, वुठ कुमलाव म्यानि जानानै।

दग्ध–हृदय होंगे शीतल
श्री कृष्ण की कृपा–दृष्टि से।
अर्जुन को आज्ञा दी
'शैथिल्य त्याग रणवीर बनो
उठो और युद्ध करो।'
काश ! हमें भी मुक्त करते
दीनता और हीनता की भावना से।[1]

वे कृष्ण के उस रूप पर मोहित हैं जो अर्जुन के हृदय में नव–स्फूर्ति का संचार करता है। जसोदा तथा नन्द के बालकृष्ण अथवा गोपियों के रसिया बालम से उन्हें गीता के कृष्ण ने मोहित किया है। स्वयं मास्टर जी कर्म–सिद्धान्त पर अटल विश्वास रखते हैं और जीवन को सुन्दर बनाने के लिये कर्म की महत्ता को स्वीकारते हैं। वर्तमान कालीन दुर्दशा पर नियंत्रण पाने के लिये, भीतरी और बाहरी शत्रु को परास्त करने के लिये तथा पृथ्वी पर ही स्वर्ग की स्थापना के लिये आवश्यक है कि मनुष्य निष्क्रियता का चोला उतार कर प्रतिकूलस्थितियों का डट कर सामना करे तभी गीता का उपदेश सार्थक होगा तथा कथनी और करनी का अन्तर समाप्त हो जायेगा।

'महान कर्म–योग का पालन करना
ध्येय है कृष्ण पूजा का
और मानना रहबर अपना
धर्मपथ पर श्री कृष्ण देव को।
व्यावहारिक जीवन में जो नहीं अपनाये
गीता के एक आध श्लोक को
महिमागान करे यदि कृष्णदेव का
तो क्या लाभ है उस का ?
यदि चक्रधर श्री कृष्ण देव
आ जाये हमारे मध्य इस अवसर पर
तो क्यों न रोयेंगे हम ?
अपने हाथों में छिपा कर मुहँ
सीस झुका कर लज्जावश।[2]

---

1. वैर, लूभ तॅ दिश तय अन्याय रूपी दानवन, चक्रॅ सूत्यि अभिमानचे फुटरावि थर श्री कृष्णदेव। ज़ोर ज़रि रसत्यन ग़रीबन बेकसन करि यावरी, दादमुत्यन शहलावि दिथ शीतल नज़र श्री कृष्णदेव। अरज़नस दिथ आज्ञा 'बद दिल म बन' थोद वथ त लड़ कासि ना असि दीनता, पस्ती हच़र श्री कृष्ण देव।

2. कृष्ण पूजा़ क्या छ, पालुन तमसुन्दुई थोद कर्मयूोग, धर्मिच वति हुन्द बनावुन राहबर श्रीकृष्ण देव, यिम न वरतावस अनन गीतायि हुन्द अख ओड़ श्लोक, लाभ क्या थ्यकनावनै लूकन अगर, श्री कृष्ण देव, कॉर नोमरिथ दिथ बुथिस अथ असि वदव नाश्रमि सूत्यि, वुन किनस असि मंज़ अगर यियी चक्रधर श्री कृष्ण देव'।

स्पष्ट है कि कवि कृष्ण के युग–स्रष्टा रूप के प्रति आसक्त हैं। उनकी दृष्टि में कर्म–सौन्दर्य का महत्व सर्वोपरि है जिस का स्पष्ट उल्लेख श्रीमद भगवद्गीता में हुआ है।[1] कृष्ण के इस कर्म शील रूप के प्रति मोहित होकर बहुत कम कश्मीरी कवियों ने रचनाएं लिखी हैं। उन्हें या तो बालगोपाल ने मोह लिया है या राधा के चित्त चोर पिया ने। कृष्ण ने जिस महान सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्व को निबाया और आततायी जनों के विनाश हेतु अर्जुन का जिस प्रकार पथ–प्रदर्शन किया, मास्टर जी उससे बेहद प्रभावित हुए थे।

मास्टर जी धार्मिक आडम्बर एवं रूढ़ि वादी विचार धारा के कट्टर विरोधी थे। उन्होंने अपने भक्ति काव्य में कहीं कहीं नाजुक स्थितियों की ओर भी संकेत किया है। यहां भक्ति में दार्शनिक चिन्तन का मेल हुआ है। मास्टर जी की रचनाओं में भक्ति, काव्य एवं दर्शन की त्रिवेणी प्रवाहित हो उठी है। चिन्तन की गहराइयों में उतर कर जब भक्त–कवि ज़िन्दा कौल जीव, माया और ब्रह्म के पारस्परिक सम्बन्धों पर विचार करते हैं तो उन्हें अपने क्षणिक अस्तित्व का बोध व्याकुल कर देता है। ज्ञान ज्योति की एक हल्की किरण जब उस के अन्धकारमय हृदय में फूट पड़ती है तो उसे ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि प्रसन्न चित्त या होश में आई हुई कोई गोपी चुपके से रास मण्डल के भीतर प्रविष्ट हुई और भीतर ही भीतर कृष्ण मय हो उठी।

व्यंग्य–काव्य के क्षेत्र में भी मास्टर जी की देन उल्लेखनीय है। इस दृष्टि से 'अज़्युक गाटंजार' (आज की बुद्धिमानी) शीर्षक कविता महत्त्वपूर्ण है। आज के विकासोन्मुख भौतिक जगत में बुद्धि बहुत आगे निकल चुकी है और हृदय पिछड़ कर पीछे रह गया है। यही कारण है कि उन्नत देशों में आज युवा–पीढ़ी पहचान के संकट का शिकार बन चुकी है। आज ईश–भय या दैवगति जैसे शब्द महत्त्वहीन हो गये हैं। मास्टर जी इसे मानवता के लिए घातक समझ कर हमारी सोच पर प्रहार करते हुए हमें सचेत करने का प्रयास करते हैं:–

---

1. 'नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वे कर्म जयायो ह्यकर्मणः। ?
   शरीर यात्रापि च तेन प्रसिद्धयेद कर्मणः।।
   'श्रीमद् भगवद्गीता' अध्याय–३, श्लोक
   तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्य कर्म समाचर।
   असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरषः।। ?

'श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता' – अध्याय–३, श्लोक–१६

'धन और शक्ति है उपलब्ध मनुश्य को आज
बुद्धि–वैभव के बलपर, पनप रही
पाने की लालसा अद्भुत साहस के साथ
ईश भय को भगा दिया है अक्लमन्दी ने।[1]

मनुष्य की हिंसा वृत्तिपर क्रुद्ध होकर कवि स्वयं मर्मान्तक पीड़ा का अनुभव करते हुए व्यंग्य के तेज़ नश्तर से मनुष्य के मानस पर छाई हुई स्वार्थ की मोटी तह को चीर डालता है:–

'हम तो तुले हैं, शेर बने हैं
परस्पर इक दूजे का वध करने के हेतु
भेड़ियों को भी मात किया है आज मनुष्य ने।[2]

निष्कर्षतः हम कह सकते हैं कि मास्टर ज़िन्द कौल ने २०वीं शताब्दी के पांचवें दशक में भकित से सम्बन्धित एक समन्वयात्मक दृष्टिकोण अपनी रचनाओं के द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया है। उन्होंने भक्ति को एक श्रेष्ठ वैचारिक धरातल प्रदान किया। जीवन की सात्विकता पर उन्हें अटूट विश्वास है। वे आस्तिक होने के साथ साथ आशावादी भी थे। उन्हें दृढ़ विश्वास है कि जीवन को सफल बनाने के लिये त्याग की नीरसता नहीं बल्कि अनुराग की सरसता अपेक्षित है। मास्टर जी ने कश्मीरी भाषा में अधिक नहीं लिखा है लेकिन जो कुछ लिखा है उसमें दिव्यानुभूति के साथ प्राचीन परम्परा एवं नवीन सच का अद्भसुत संगम हुआ है। उन्होंने २०वीं शताब्दी के तकनीकी युग में भक्ति की स्रोतस्विनी प्रवाहित करके दग्ध मानव हृदय को रस सिक्त करने का भरसक प्रयास किया है। लौकिक प्रेम के माध्यम से अलौकिक प्रेम की सांकेतिक अभिव्यक्ति ने उनकी रचनाओं को दोहरा अर्थ प्रदान किया है। कवि कर्म उनके लिये कठोर साधना है और इस साधना पथ पर अग्रसर होकर वे नित नये अनुभवों की राह से गुज़रते हुए अपने कर्म का निर्वाह करते रहे। निस्सन्देह मास्टर जी आधुनिक कश्मीरी कविता के एक सशक्त हस्ताक्षर हैं।

---

1. 'ज़ोर, ज़र अऽलिमन दितुक ह्‌यमत तं शौक़
गाटजारन कोसनक खोफ–ए–खेदाय।'

'सुमरन'–कवितास–'अज़्युक गाटजार'

2. 'गालनय प्यठ अख अकिस गा'मुति छि शेर
रामहोन्यन हिज़ं मनोशव था'व न जाय।'

'सुमरन–कविता 'अज़्युक गाटजार'

BHAGAVAD GITA—ITS MEANING IN LIFE

—R. K. Langar

It is well known that the *Bhagavad Gita* is a scripture of mankind. The *Gita* is not only the essence of the *Upanishads* as it is generally understood, but it is a commentary on the entire vedic literature and a guide for living that enables a man to realize his true nature while performing worldly duties. The teachings of the *Gita* can serve to demolish all the walls that divide individuals, communities, nations and races. The *Gita* has a message for everyone, whatever be his religion. If there is any scripture which can help us solve the complexities of the modern times it is the *Gita* with its broad-based teachings. The general impression that the *Gita* is meant to be understood only by scholars or spiritually elevated persons is erroneous. There are many meaningful repetitions in the *Gita,* from which we can infer that it is not meant exclusively for the scholarly but also for men of average understanding. The book needs to be so interpreted that it can be understood by a common man to reshape his life as per its teachings.

The *Gita*, as a scriptural text, can be studied as a piece of literature. In fact it is a literature of literatures. It does not offer a religious model but one that is presented for the good of any man, which can be adopted by the renunciate, the householder, the contemplative and the worldly. The *Gita* conveys that what cannot be followed in day-to-day life is not religion. Its teachings are so down to earth that they help one to overcome any type of practical crisis in one's life. It lays emphasis on the inner divinity of man and suggests throughout that there is no opposition between spiritual and secular life. It says that one doesn't have to abandon duties in order to know God. The *Gita* lays the utmost stress on an individual's performance of duty. Some commentators, very rightly, describe the *Gita* as the gospel of work, of work which must be done without any selfish motive. It does not teach renunciation of action but renunciation in action. It says that man has to work as long as he lives because work is unavoidable. And if any work is unavoidable it must be so performed that one stands to gain from it. And that is the reason why the *Gita* advocates

Nishkam Karmayoga so that by performing his duties selflessly man elevates himself and acquires knowledge.

The major thrust of the *Gita* is on the pursuit of action in the living present. It advises us to live supremely well in the present. If we do so it will whitewash our dark past and make our future bright. How true this advice is! Experience teaches us that it is wrong to think that our past glories will make our future bright. Also if we think too much about our future, it would disturb our concentration while engaged in the present work. That is why the *Gita* teaches us not to think about the fruit of action because that would be tantamount to thinking about the future. So we must work in the present with single-minded determination and not hanker after the result of action.

The *Gita* should not be treated as a treatise of metaphysical philosophy, rich metaphysical ideas as it presents. Practicality is the essence or the core of its teaching for both those who have a metaphysical bent of mind and those who have not. The metaphysics of the *Gita* requires us to remain in the world and promote human values through our personal contribution. The *Gita* presents no metaphysical truth for its own sake. It reconciles the three major aspects of the Indian philosophy: non-dualism, qualified non-dualism and dualism. It also unifies work, devotion and knowledge. The Gita-religion is a dynamic religion. It attracts those who relish adventuresomeness in work. It says action is for self-finding, self fulfil-ment and self-realisation. Its message is that the challenges of life have to be met with resolute action. The *Gita* wants us to live in the thought of the good of the world. It says that one should not be tied mentally to any social group, nor to any community but to mankind. This means real freedom of spirit which enables a man to work for the welfare of all mankind.

The *yoga* advocated by the *Gita* is wide in scope, flexible and many-sided, not merely confined to a set of exercises or the breathing technique as is commonly understood by *yoga*, especially in the West. No one can understand the full implication of the word 'Yoga' unless one reads, understands and assimilates what is said in the *Gita* about it. The word signifies perfect poise or mental evenness that is the result of communion of the mind with the spirit. The 'Yoga' of the *Gita* implies truth, it is bliss, it is skill in action,

it is evenness of mind, it is the art of working without desire, it is equal vision. The *Gita* says that the highest *yogi* is he who feels the pain and joy of others as if they were his own, who identifies himself with the whole world. He is the *yogi* who is constantly raising himself from physical, mental and individual imperfection to a more perfect state of existence.

The *Gita* recommends surrender to God only at the end. This surrender is very active and not in the least passive or a state of self-submission. It advises us to rise from a state of self-pity through self-assertion and then surrender to God, through the process of self-effacement. Similarly it re-evaluates *sanyas* equating it with *yoga*. The *sanyas* of the *Gita* is not external but internal and so is *tyag*. In any case, the *Gita* does not recommend running away physically from life to attain *sanyas*. It teaches inner renunciation rather than that which is merely external.

The *Gita* establishes the existence of a single *Atman* in all creatures and emphasises unity in diversity, the oneness of all existence. The spiritual outlook reflected in the teachings of the *Gita* constitutes the very foundation of the Indian thought which is essentially no different from the secular outlook that is the backbone of the Indian constitution. The *Gita* advocates SARVA DHARMA SAMABHAVA on the ground that all religions come from one God, the supreme spirit, one without a second. All Indian saints have written and spoken about the *Gita* in glowing terms which confirms the influence of the text on their spiritual outlook. In fact there is an interconnectedness between sainthood, *vedanta* and the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The *Gita* teaches moderation in life. It says *yoga* is not meant for those who eat too much or who do not eat at all. Moderation is the correct attitude of life. Somehow we tend to believe that if we exert ourselves in any undertaking to the extreme, we get the best results. This is not correct because perfection actually consists in balancing extremes that is attained through harmonisation of our activities. The *Gita* advises self-control and does not approve of abstention. It says that with faith, zeal and self-control, man can attain knowledge. It dispels doubts. Its message removes depression and is the best anti-depressant. The *Gita* is the one scripture which is

bound to gain increasing validity and momentum as time passes.

The *Gita* asserts that man has free will which he must use to decide his course of action in life. It also says that man by his good acts can attain liberation while living. It exhorts us to remain engaged in working for the welfare of all. It says that the best sacrifice is the knowledge-sacrifice in that all works in their entirety end in knowledge. The *Gita* emphasises devotion but it maintains that a devotee has to be a very practical person. He becomes dear to God if others are not agitated by him and also if he does not feel agitated himself, if he is free from desire, is wise, impartial and behaves alike with friend and foe, is unattached to a person or a place.

Lord Krishna says in the *Gita* that in whatever way people worship or approach Him, He accepts them because all follow Him. This implies that there is only one God who has different names and forms. This also bears out the catholicity of the *Gita*-religion. The *Gita* delcares: let one worship God of one's choice but let that not limit God in that form only.

It is not easy to list out all that the *Bhagavad Gita* teaches us because there is nothing that is important to us for living which it does not teach. Its teachings are so universal that they suit all castes and creeds provided we have an open mind. We draw guidance from the *Gita* in proportion to the degree of our own understanding. As our state of consciousness rises higher, we find deeper meanings in the teachings of the *Gita*. Its influences acts on a person like a teacher, guiding him or her under all circumstances.

BHAGAVAAN JI AFTER 1968

—S. N. Fotedar

Association with a Saint or even a mere touch or a single glance from him can transform a man and make him Divine. His heart is full of universal compassion and he works ceaselessly for redeeming suffering souls from ignorance. He guides them to a life of joy, freedom and immortality. The Saint is verily God in flesh and blood.

During the present century one such saint of exalted dimensions was Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji of Kashmir, who graced not only the sacred soil of Kashmir where he was born and lived (1898-1968) but also played his part in the spiritual uplift of India, though he never moved out of Kashmir in his physical body.

The people of Kashmir gave him the name Bhagavaan while he was still in his earthly existence, a unique phenomenon indeed, a rare saint for whom a monument is raised and relics are enshrined. In his Ashram at Kharyar, Srinagar, where his marble statue has been installed, regular *Aarti* is held everyday. His *Mahanirvana* and *Jayanti* festivals are observed every year. A *Yajna* is performed on the former occasion and a *Sadhu Bhandar* held and prayers offered on the latter. A Trust (Regd.) has been organised for the maintenance of the institution and for other activities aimed at spreading Bhagavaan Ji's message of universal love and brotherhood. The main aim is to awaken the masses and raise them to a higher level of consciousness. This is styled as "Bhagavaan Consciousness" by his Australian devotees and an attempt is made to develop this consciousness for the betterment of the whole world. Since it is not possible to give a full picture of Bhagavaan Ji's life, of his *sadhana* and other manifold activities in a small article, I shall confine myself to a brief sketch of his life.

Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji was born in 1898 A. D. at Bana Mohalla, Srinagar. His revered father Pandit Narayan Joo Bhan was a *Pushmina* merchant and a man of liberal mind. Bhagavaan Ji's pious mother Smt. Haramal was the daughter of Pandit Prasad Joo Parimoo, a mystic-saint popularly known as "Zad-Bharata". In a vision at *Khir Bhavani* the Divine Mother had foretold that she

would be taking birth in his house and thus the blessed girl (Haramal) was born, who later got Bhagavaan Ji in her lap (as her son). On account of strained family circumstances, Bhagavaan Ji had a very troubled time in his early days. He had to give up his studies after passing the middle school examination.

He had studied Sanskrit, Persian and other languages but all along he was detached, attending to 'Raslilas' and other *Bhajan Mandalis* and also visiting saints. He would sip from all cups but drain none.

From his early boyhood he had started going to Sharika Bhagavati Shrine at Hari Parvat, Srinagar. It became a routine for him to circum-ambulate the hill every day. When he was about 25 years old he was blessed with the *Darshan* of Sharika Bhagavati. He did not rest at that but aspired for attaining perfection and plunged headlong into intense *sadhana* for exploring all the aspects of the Divine Reality and gaining mastery over the *Tattwas*, with no hold barred and with scant attention to his bodily welfare. This process was similar to what Sri Ramakrishna Parmahansa had adopted after having the *darshan* of Maha-Kali. For some time he continued to live with mundane affairs which gradually waned off and later he took no interest in such matters whatsoever.

The most crucial period of his *sadhana*, a do-or-die effort, was while he was residing at Rangteng in Srinagar (1929-36). He lay stretched on a bed all the 24 hours of the day, absorbed in the Supreme with a small wick lamp kept lighted. He would sometimes fast for months together and sometimes take large quantities of food at a time. His body got swollen. At times he spat large quantities of blood. A rat had bored a hole in one of his heels and he did not seem to be conscious of it. On occasions he would eat handfuls of *datura* and other lethal intoxicants. The *sadhana* continued for about 7 years after which he emerged a radiant soul, but with a battered body. Smoking the *Chilum* continued to be his constant habit from an early age to the day he gave up his mortal coil.

Questioned why he was fasting so often he said that he was taking tons of energy through his puffs (smoking) and food was not necessary.

After this *sadhana* of seven years, he came to be recognized as a great saint and he began his saintly mission of improving the lot of humanity and alleviating the distress of people who called on him for succour and hope. He even started helping *sadhus* and other people monetarily and the practice continued till the end of his days in this physical world.

After the attainment of perfection he had, in pursuit of his mission, to contend with opposing inimical forces which, left to themselves, would have harmed our country. He had to exert a lot, to keep these forces in check. On some occasions, you would find him with flaming eyes riveted upwards, parched and foaming lips, fasting, refusing to take even water but addressing some invisible forces. To what extent he was successful in taming those forces is known to all. One wonders at his unrelenting efforts, his determination of not yielding to dark forces for a number of years with scant attention to his physical comforts. Such a great saint, with such endurance is really a God and Bhagavaan Ji displayed this.

He seemed always in tune with the infinite and would come down from a higher plane of consciousness in response to requests and appeals made by devotees and that too for a few moments only. He started the practice of offering *ahuti* into his fire pot (Kangdi)from the year 1936 onward, later into an Iron *Sekdi* and then into the *Dhuni* till the end.

Saints do not live in their outer actions. It is not possible to speak of the inner *sadhana* of Bhagavaan Ji which is a closed book. It is possible, however, to give an account of his *sadhana* as seen by common people in diverse fields and disciplines.

Though other saints too emerged from the sacred soil of Kashmir during the last three or four centuries or so, active in their spiritual realms, they either seem to be spent up or gone to higher unfathomable realms. We have to depend solely on the divine protection of the spiritual colossus, Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji, not only for succour but also for effectively combating the satanic forces, bent on the destruction of our culture and personality.

I smell and visualise that the decade of the nineties will be a period of great test for the lovers of Bhagavaan Ji. They have to strengthen the spiritual exercise, be engrossed in Bhagavaan Ji's worship through *bhajans*, meditation, offerings. Dark clouds have to vanish. Bhagavaan Ji is active in the subtle plane, we have to develop the attitude to present ourselves before Him. All the *Ashramites* have to undergo strenuous *sadhana* to get in tune with Bhagavaan Consciousness. I have faith in Pran Nath Ji to hold the internal front and Chrungoo Sahib the external, because the *swollen* ranks of devotees need guidance.

Bhagavaan Ji's presence is not doubtful. Saints are healers, masters and spiritual guides. They seek disciples and hunt for them so that the chord is framed between master and aspirants, *gurus* and *shishyas*.

One day Bhagavaan Ji had to pose for a photograph and some close associates wanted to be included, but he disallowed that. There was some annoyance. Next day Bhagavaan Ji very patiently explained, "This photograph has to go to distant corners, that is why I wanted it to be so." Today when thirteen years have passed we have seen that Bhagavaan Ji's photograph has reached every home. It is placed in *Pooja* rooms and the *Ashrams*, that are coming up. The aura of his spiritual and mental shelter has spread so wide and far that Bhagavaan Ji's "Parivar" has extended beyond all geographical boundaries. Devotees have taken him to Australia, New Zealand, Japan and other parts of India. Bhagavaan Ji has been gracious to those who need him and to those whom he needs.

In 1975, Justice S. N. Katju, a *sadhaka* practising *Shakti* worship was in a difficulty and there was some conflict in his mind about his *sadhana*. Bhagavaan Ji appeared before him in a vision and said, "Your *Gurudeva* and I are one, and you have now been put under my care for carrying out the mission of the masters. What you are doing under the guidance of Papaji was all chalked out by me and your *Gurudeva* together". Katju said, "he spoke in Kashmiri, what I needed. Then he slowly faded out of my vision and I opened my eyes. How keen Bhagavaan Ji is for spiritual seekers."

In Feb, 1975, Philip Simpfendorfer, an Australian *Bhakta* had come on Kashmir *yatra* with some friends. He alongwith his friends had came to see the writer and his problem was about the mission and message for him from Bhagavaan Ji. The writer said, "Mr. Philip, do you remember how Bhagavaan Ji accepted your request when your daughter was to be married." "Yes every detail of that day", said Philip, "It was Saturday when my daughter Helen was to marry Peter. From Friday it started raining, I went into my room and prayed before Bhagavaan Ji, asking to take care of the happiness of the children, give sunshine for the outdoor wedding function. The miracle happened, clouds got rolled, bright sunshine appeared till the function was over and by evening again clouds came, but it did not rain. I was happy how Bhagavaan Ji helps when we are in complete obedience."

"Again, it was 15th of Feb. 1978 while in full concentration and meditation I met him in a very awakened state, he said, for the guidance of humanity we seek people in every land, strengthen their faith. They fight against the dark ocean of destruction. We guided them when there was no religion. We do not interfere with religion. Well-being of the world and spirituality of man is the goal. My mission and goal was made clear", said Philip.

INDIGO INDIAN OF MYSTIC EAST

—H. N. Kaul

I am no great believer in men who claim direct liaison with *GOD* (emphasis mine). To me all Godmen are fraudmen, whom I dare not touch with a barge pole.

Naturally, I hit the ceiling when my God-fearing and God-abiding wife asked me one fine morning, to accompany her to a Godman, wrapping me up with a lot of crap about the supposed miraculous powers of the holy man and the likely material benefits I could get. I may have had a bite at the bait but before she could hook me up for the visit she slipped when she told me the Godman was a hash addict and that settled it for me. Being mortally afraid of dopers and junkies I put my foot down and refused. It was in the winter of 1967-68, hardly three months after my marriage.

In the summer of 1968, while cooling my heels in Kashmir on a holiday, my wife continued her efforts to bring me round to a visit to the holyman. This time I had to thwart a two-pronged attack, as my sister-in-law Jai, a committed devotee, had joined forces with my wife. But I was so scared by the mere thought of confronting a junkie that I refused to budge even an inch, despite the provocations, temptations and nagging. And when it was time for us to say thank you to the vale and tie our shoelaces for the return journey it so happened my wife trooped in, with puffed cheeks and blood-shot eyes, a picture of misery and grief and broke down : "He's left us."

And to my sympathetic enquiries, she cleared the riddle. The Godman was dead.

"Good riddance", I thought, and felt a surge of relief through me. But to show my concern, I volunteered to pay my homage to the saint by joining his funeral procession. This was great comfort to her and I had nothing to be scared of. "Who is afraid of the dead, a dead junky, at that ?"

I kept my word and was at the spot on the dot. But I was stunned to see the size of the crowd—a funeral crowd any national

leader would have envied. And what struck me most was the devotion of the people, more than their grief. They expressed their grief with rose petals and tears.

Curiosity welled up in me to know why so many sane people were drawn to a doper, but the bustle of hectic life in Delhi put the lid on my inquisitiveness, and I parked the thought of the Godman in the closed shelf of my brain and forgot about him the way I forget all the trifles that cross my way.

But it was not to be so. One day when I returned from my work very late, tired to the bone and ready to hit the sack, I failed to recognize my bedroom. A Godrej-sized cane-rack had pushed the yacht-size bed to the corner and a string of coloured bulbs had given the room a festive look. My wife, in the lotus posture, eyes closed, a string of beads in her hand, was seated like a statue in front of the rack. I looked at the rack. An old man in typical Kashmiri Brahminical attire was staring at me from the rack. He was sporting a six-tier Muslim turban, wearing a 'pheran', drawing at his 'chillum', a 'tongue of flame' licking his broad and furrowed brow, His luminous eyes were penetrating through me like an X-ray. For a few minutes I could not take my eyes off him. It was an impressive photograph in a chrome frame.

I roused my wife out of her revery. She promptly introduced me to the Godman, pointing an enthusiastic finger at the photograph and she kissed her locket, in which another mini-portriat of the saint was studded with reverence. And so the Godman, despite my apparent aversion, started staying with me right in my bedroom and in the heart of my wife, And I had to stay with him for peace at home. I had misgivings that the ghost of the saint should stand like a ten-foot concrete wall between me and my wife. But it was not so, I managed peaceful co-existence with the godman.

Satya Sai Baba, a south Indian godman with a liberal crop of Negroid hair that shaded his head like an umbrella, was the most sought-after godman those days and I decided to cash in on his popularity to make a fast buck and steady my fast declining bank balance. Somehow, I managed to gatecrash and got an audience with the saint and wrote a fifty page sketch of my impressions.

The booklet was sold even before it hit the stalls. Though it fattened my bank balance a bit, it did not make me any wiser about godmen and I continued to love them like the plague. Then two things happened and I began to waver, but still I was not fully sold to the idea.

I prize two things in life : my son Ashish and my drink. One day Ashish suddenly doubled up in pain and his shrieks and cries were piercing my heart like lances. It was midnight and I was trying to ring up and rouse my doctor out of his slumber, when my wife brought Ashish to me and put him in my lap, She opened a rusty tin box, scooped up a pinch of ash and put it in the crying child's mouth. Suddenly like a taut wire let loose at both ends, the child's stiffness vanished and he calmed down. Within five minutes he was his giggling self again, with no pain or sickness. I smiled through misty eyes in utter disbelief: How could a pinch of ash calm a child, who seemed dangerously ill ? This was the poser that was raising its hood like a cobra in my mind and biting into my convictions. I had a mind to get the ash chemically examined but gave up the idea lest it may lose its healing touch for Ashish. Since then a pinch of holy ash is the first medicine we try on Ashish whenever he falls ill. Dr. Arya's regular visits for check-up are of course there, but we have not taken the child specialist into our confidence about our potent drug. I might have been shaken in my convictions a bit, but I was still unconvinced.

Doctors had advised me to cut down on liquor as my liver had lost its capacity to keep track with my intake. I stubbornly disagreed with the advice, till I was knocked down with unbearable pain. I started living on pethidine shots and mandril tablets, but it was only temporary relief, I was not getting better. My insides were in a mess. Touched by my plight, my wife tried her wiliest best to persuade me to swallow a pinch of the holy ash, but firstly because of the pride of my convictions and secondly because I never wanted her to score over me, I brushed her aside. I was writhing with pain but would not give in.

I was itching for a smoke and pleaded with my wife for a fag, despite doctor's strict warning, expecting the usual harangue of : "liquor and cigarettes are poison to you". But I was pleasantly

surprised when she readily gave me the butt of a Charminar she dug out from the folds of her purse. Though my brand is different and I don't relish butts, but being off the fag for over a week, I readily accepted her generosity and hungrily puffed the life out of the butt. I felt a surge of relief passing through my body. It was all balm, blue and sunny. I felt like a king lighter, happier and better. A fag after three days is just like posting a miden kiss on the lips of the love, and with these pleasant thoughts I slipped into deep slumber after five days of agony and tossing about in the bed. When I came out of it, my wife attributed my miraculous escape from the clutches of death not to the liver-extract and terramycine and the hundreds of tablets and capsules I had consumed, but to the healing touch of "Bhagavaanji's," her godman. "Where does Bhagavaanji come in?" I asked, partly in anger and partly in surprise.

"The half-smoked Charminar was Bhagavaanjis", she told me and showed me scores of half-smoked cigarettes in her purse.

I decided to find out more about her "Bhagavaanji", whom she had now made the honorary physician in absentia for me and my son Ashish. And my quest began in right earnest.

Indians seeped in deep superstition have elevated thousands of mortals to the status of Godhood all through the ages and this tradition of creating a halo of Godhood around men and women has continued to this day. And it is the unflinching faith of the devotees more than the miracles of these godmen that have made them great. The grapevine is the most effective medium of circulation. While the few among thousands of such godmen have circulated all over the country, many more, despite better achievements, have remained obscure. And Gopinathji Bhan, whom his devotees identify with God, or atleast with God's closest circle has not reached all over the country like Satya Sai Baba or all over the globe like the jet-age Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the once spiritual guru of Mia Farrow and the Beatles. Except within his own community in Kashmir and a few individuals outside the state, he has not been in the spotlight despite being spiritually more robust and miracle-wise more stunning.

Narayan Bhan was a man sold out to the idea of God and constantly in pursuit of a meeting with the Almighty. But wordly-wise, he knew spiritualism was no substitute for a square meal and hence did business in *pashmina* wool. And like every good Kashmiri Brahmin, his spiritual pursuits did not prevent him from marrying and raising good many children. He married Hara Mali, who her father believed was the incarnation of Goddess Ragnya—the deity who relishes milk. And Gopinathji Bhan was born off the conjugal union of the two spiritual sparks. He was the second of three brothers and two sisters. Narayan Bhan bequeathed his property to his stepmother and his spiritual legacy to his son.

Gopinathji was born on July 3, 1898 in his ancestral house at Banamohalla, in the heart of Srinagar. But the family had to shuttle around, thanks to the liberal attitude of Narayan Bhan.

Gopinathji was not averse to studies and passed the Middle Standard. He lost his mother at the tender age of 12 and started earning his bread and butter at the age of 16 as a compositor. But born free, he shook off the shackles of subordination and opened a grocery shop. He carried on for ten years but then gave up.

He churned the scriptures and drew their gist, but showed special preference for the *Gita* and the *Vedas*. No one, not even his biographer, Mr. S. N. Fotedar, is sure about his Guru. Some say it was his father who initiated him into the realm of the mystic, while some others feel it was the holy man Balak Kaw, but the majority opinion is that Zana Kak Tufchi, a local godman, should be credited with this honour.

The reason being that Gopinathji attended the anniversary function of Tufchi religiously and even cleaned the dirty pots at the function. A few of the staunchest followers believe that he was his own 'Guru' and received the word directly from God.

Guru or no Guru, Gopinathji rose so high in the estimation of his devotees that they started calling him "Bhagavaanji", God. Never before in the history of Kashmir has a mortal been elevated so high.

Beginning with a deep study of the scriptures a brooding concentration to unfold the self, visits to shrines, and pulls at the

hashish-*chillum*, step by step he climbed up and a few who saw in him the saviour, clung to him. He neither offered help nor shrugged them off but sustained their faith with a miracle now and then. The cult spread, his devotees had found a Messiah and they installed his statue at Kharyar, a comparatively unknown temple in Srinagar. The faith spread, the devotees multiplied and those who had not seen him in his mortal form, drew inspiration from his life-like statue. Faith, they say, is a horse, you can ride when in distress.

Many devotees come forward with tales of the powers of this holy man. They are men and women whom it is very difficult to disbelieve. He showed many devotees, including Pt. Nila Kaul, Goddess Sharika in human form. Sixty people were served lunch prepared for six. He predicted wars with accuracy to the minute. He healed those given up by the best brains in medicine. He read thoughts, both wicked and noble, like an open book. He was here, there and everywhere at the same time and many sane people vouch for it. His commitment was total. He gave everything without asking anything in return. He shunned publicity and abhorred fame. He carried his laurels with indifference. He was a godman but never said so.

A piece of advice, however. Anniversaries, holy fires, books and pamphlets, 'Bhajans' and Kirtans are good. They keep the clan bonds strong. But look beyond the statue of the great man, untie the knots and don't freeze him in stone. It is polluting, not honouring. Let the Indigo Indian spread the fragrance of mystic east for all to smell and refresh. Open the portals of Kharyar for the world to see that God is a man at his best.

BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI : THE SAINT EXTRAORDINARY

—Tejnath Dhar

In response to the questions of his enthusiastic devotees and inquisitive seekers about the nature of the self, Ramana Maharshi is reported to have observed : "The State of self-realisation, as we call it, is not attaining something new or reaching some goal which is far away, but simply being that which you always are and which you always have been. All that is needed is that you give up your realization of the not-true as true.... The state we call realisation is simply being oneself, not knowing anything or becoming anything. If one has realised, one is that which alone is and which alone has always been." If Bhagavaanji had given discourses or entered into conversation with his devotees on the subject of realizing one's self, he would perhaps have said the same thing, because he was a living embodiment of this vital truth about the state of self-realisation. The narrative of his life, though plain and singularly unspectacular, is a striking illustration of how—through single-minded devotion, rigorous discipline, and iron will—he attained this true state : of being himself.

It is almost unbelievable that a saint of the stature of Bhagavaanji could have lived so near our time which, because of our relentless and unabashed pursuit of material gains, has witnessed a radical transformation in our life styles, reflected most conspicuously in the steady decline of faith and our indifference to the rich spiritual heritage of our land. I am not even sure how many amongst us can share my feelings of regret when I recall that though Bhagvaanji lived right through my school and college days, I did not have the good fortune of having his *darshan*, and touching his feet. For me it will always be a costly miss, an opportunity I did not avail myself of, for does not Kabir say it beautifully : "A pilgrimage is good ; To meet a saint is better ?" And what better luck could it have been to have met not just a saint, but a saint of saints, a veritable Bhagavaan, for that is what Gopinathji was and still is for hundreds and thousands of his devotees, whose number has been ever on the increase ?

Bhagvaanji's journey towards sainthood in Kashmir can be understood in its proper perspective as part of a long tradition in the holy valley of *rishis*, as Kashmir was known in the past, and of the still older tradition of asceticism in India. The way of life in ancient India, which is now generally understood as the Hindu way of life, is perhaps unique in providing a proper and meaningful space for ascetics, *sadhus*, *rishis*, and saints within the normal recognizable social framework. For the four-fold *varnashrama* provided for different stages in an individual's growth and maturity, through the stages of boyhood, youth, marriage and family life to the last stage, in which he stepped into asceticism. This ideal arrangement balanced social needs and material pursuits for keeping the race alive and providing for its upkeep and growth, with an individual's quest for spiritual enlightenment and self-realisation. It recognized asceticism as a stage following worldly pleasures and joys towards a state in which, through rigorous detachment, every being learnt to withdraw into himself and work towards his personal salvation.

The most remarkable feature of this arrangement is the clear and realistic focus of the ancient Indians on asceticism : it is something normal, desirable, and within the reach of every person ; because of this, it has remained an integral part of our society. As a logical extension of a life of fulfilment, it is not something unusual, i. e., a thing diametrically opposed to social and material goals. However, it did affirm that the ultimate purpose of life was much more than perpetuating the race in material comfort. This consciousness was supposed to have a healthy, salutary effect on the earlier stages of an individual's life, imbuing it with a definite moral purpose and character.

In Kashmir, a slightly altered form of this tradition was the strong tradition of householder-sadhus and saints, of enlightened souls who had attained extraordinary spiritual powers, even while living in recognizable family structures. It survived the onslaughts of the rise of Muslim faith, and made inroads into the spiritual fabric of Islam through the order of the Sufi saints. I have had the good fortune of knowing quite a few of the householder-saints, who preferred to remain almost unknown. They were extraordinarily gentle, humane, and compassionate beings, who kept the tradition of spirituality alive in Kashmir.

Although the four-fold *varnashrama* was the standard practice among the Hindus, many people chose to plunge straightaway into the last stage, bypassing the preceding ones of marriage and raising a family. In course of time, this tendency grew further, giving rise to the emergence of another class of saints. Some even held that a person who chooses to be a celibate and leads a life of renunciation right from an early stage is ideally suited to face the rigours of ascetic life.

Within the differing strands of this main tradition, *sadhus* and saints had enormous freedom to do whatever they thought was right and desirable for attaining their ends. There is hardly any evidence, literary and archival, in pre-Buddhist times to show that asceticism had a rigid institutionalized character, which could be identified through recognizable orders, monks, standardized practices, training schedules, and rules firmly laid-down. This left people free to choose different modes of worship of the deities of their choice; they were, likewise, free to adopt ascetic practices of their choice involving physical and mental discipline. Even the search for a proper mentor or *guru* was a part of the saintly quest. This partially accounts for the great variety in the saintly order in India. If we find the emergence and growth of more recognizable kinds of saintly orders in the later periods, it is largely because of the growing influence of Buddhism and Jainism on the Hindu thinking and practices. It is not my intention to go into details concerning the various kinds of saintly orders ; I have mentioned this social phenomenon only to show what kind of a saint Bhagavaanji was.

The most striking feature of Bhagvaanji's life is that though he lived hardly a few decades ago, when writing about people of eminence and distinction in any field was quite possible, as documenting lives had already developed into a standard literary practice, we actually know very little about him. In spite of our awareness of the extraordinary spiritual powers he had and of the respect he commanded among people, we have less than adequate knowledge about his personality and the nature of his achievement. All that is available to us is a short and in many respects a very inadequate biography by one of his devotees, the late S. N. Fotedar. A devotee of a long standing, he had known Bhagavaanji for over

two decades. Also available today are a few short pieces of reminiscences by some people, which provide descriptive accounts of their meetings with him and also of some miracles that he performed. The above-mentioned biography in particular is more of a chronicle of Bhagavaanji's physical movements in the city of Srinagar than a sustained narrative of his life.

The reasons for the paucity of material about Bhagavaanji lie in the very nature of his sainthood. He had such a normal and ordinary childhood and youth that nobody could have thought that he would become an eminent saint. In fact, till the time he was in his thirties, he had a regular job and then ran a small business in a shop, because he needed money to help the members of his joint family. If he resolved not to marry and took interest in visiting holy places, it was not something too unusual. One can cite examples of several house-hold saints of Kashmir who did not marry and did not earn for the families they belonged to. I emphasize these details to establish that Bhagavaanji's early life did not provide any significant clues about the nature of his future life, as one normally finds in the lives of Kabir, Mirabai, or Ramakrishna ; neither struggle, nor neglect, nor extraordinary visions and fainting spells, in fact, his early life was too prosaic and ordinary. Compared with the lives of many of the known saints, it had no fire, no striking passion, no flamboyance, which could stimulate people's interest in him. Although he had a well-directed will to seek his *Parmeshwar* and spent virtually his whole life, more noticeably after he gave up active work of all kinds, in pursuit of his goal, he did not do anything out of the ordinary which could attract the attention of people. He undertook no complicated measures, did not do anything risky, did not even move out of his home or place of birth. Even after attaining his goal, he remained steadfast in his endeavour to be a true being. He had no ambition to announce anything to the world, or found a school, or raise a following, or reform the society of his day.

In many respects, Bhagavaanji, though he never became a house-holder in the true sense of the word, is a model of the family-saint. Till it was necessary, he shouldered the responsibility of looking after his kin. After he was free from it, he continued to live with his close relatives. He observed most of the routine

social norms, was never choosy about his food or other requirements, and seldom gave any obvious indications of his true state.

Though he maintained links with his family, he stuck to his *saadhana*. When he concentrated on it with increasing intensity, he became more and more careless about his appearance and life style. Any person seeing him for the first time could hardly take him for the realized soul that he was, for around him one could see only the trappings of commonplace *sadhus*. He would frequently smoke his *chillum* and offer *ahutis* to the *dhooni* in front of him. Most of the time, he would simply be either lying down or sitting with an abstracted look on his face. This was certainly not a very inviting sort of look, which could encourage people to talk to him. This self-absorption became his usual manner in the last years of his life. Though he allowed some of his devotees to press his feet and his legs, which he always thought no better than pieces of wood, he was not much of a talker. Most of the people who sat with him for hours together did not even open their lips, because they always held him in reverential awe. Obviously, Bhagavaanji's mode of *saadhana* did not make room for discourses, and he spoke no philosophical profundities. He was more of a loner, and complete unto himself. His biographer tells us that during the closing years of his life, he spent much of his time in *mauna*, and hardly ever took food or attended the calls of nature. Although he seldom washed his body, it always looked clean and exuded an aroma.

In spite of living through protracted spells of reticence, Bhagavaanji did not cut off his links with people. He was essentially gentle and commpassionate and fully alive to the pain and sorrow of those who came to him for succour. To them he offered solace and help and no intellectual or metaphysical fare. He spoke to them in the language that they could understand, the language of a fellow being and not of a learned *pundit*. Several people have written about Bhagavaanji's acts of kindness and also about the various ways in which he mitigated their pain. All such acts perceived by the devout as miracles have been recorded systematically by Shri Fotedar in a separate chapter in his book.

Though it is generally believed that true saints do not normally perform miracles, especially those who do not want followers or do not raise sects, yet most of them do it because

that is one of the ways for them to reach out to their fellow beings. Dadu Dayal, a famous family-saint from Rajasthan, has said that a saint is always one with God. And when he deems fit, He automatically takes care of the saint and his devotees in very many special ways, which common people see as miracles. In his celebrated autobiography, Swami Yogananda has recorded a large number of miracles of several yogis. He maintains that "by the perfection of his surrender to the Prime Healing Power, the master enabled it to flow freely through him." Here Swami Yogananda explains that it is actually God Himself who performs what are seen as 'miracles' of the Masters that act as His instruments.

Bhagavaanji's miracles of various kinds have been meticulously documented not only by his biographer but also by various other people, whose writings have featured in different issues of the *Patrika*. That is why there is no need to recount them here. I would only like to emphasize that they were actuated by his love and compassion for the people who came to him with hope. Some of them also illustrate how he came to the rescue of his loved ones during moments of their trial or crisis. Another interesting aspect of his miracles is that they were not concerned only with his desire to help or heal people, but also with his wish to enable them to have a taste of the divine. Several times he is believed to have let some of his chosen devotees to have *darshan* of the Devi, Sharika Devi of Hari Parbat in particular, right in the midst of their routine surroundings. He would let this happen in a very casual manner, which would catch his devotees off their guard. Often when they missed out on the miracle and their chance of seeing the Devi with attention, Bhagavaanji would get into his rare unusual moods: he would be playful, humorous, even mischievous. However, such moments minimized with the passage of time, for during the last phase of his intense *saadhana*, he was hardly conscious even of his surroundings.

Since Bhagavaanji was one with God even while he lived in this world, he was truly a mystic saint, and his mysticism could be called the "mysticism of personal life." Sudhir Kakar, in his illuminating study of Ramakrishna as a mystic, characterises his mysticism as ecstatic, accompanied by physical movements (such as the postures or *mudras* associated with the Indian dance). Unlike

this, "The mysticism of personal life," according to Kakar "is not rooted in ecstatic nature, but in a meeting with God in the midst of life's problems and struggles, a meeting experienced at a deep level of faith within normal waking consciousness." This, in my view, aptly describes Bhagavaanji's state as distinguished from Sri Ramakrishna's.

In my view the most remarkable part of Bhagvaanji's achievement is that he makes us see and understand the saintly path in very ordinary and human terms. No adverse circumstances in life pushed him into adopting this path ; nor did he show any unusual signs, which could be interpreted as his pre-disposed leanings in this direction. But deep inside him was a strong urge towards it. And he chose to follow this path slowly, steadily, and without any fanfare. He went on intensifying his powers of concentration to such an extent that at one stage he thought of nothing but his *Paramatman*. Everything he did was within the tried-out, known, and traditional mould, through ways and means which are neither difficult nor unattainable. This makes him into a splendid example of the realized saint, who inspires us more by his example than by his words and actions. The most direct and simple lesson of his life for us is that personal salvation is a purely individual concern and every human being can and should strive towards it: that each one of us, in spite of our ordinariness, is a potential saint.

BHAGAVAAN JI AS A LOVER OF MUSIC

—Jagannath Shivpuri

[This detailed write-up contributed by the veteran musician of note, Pt. Jagannath Shivpuri, reveals a dimension of Bhagavaanji's personality of which not enough has been said in Shri S.N. Fotedar's biography of the great saint. Inevitably, some autobiographical element has crept into this valuable piece that reveals the author's own extra-ordinary devotion to the Bhagavaan and to music (which he has served all his life with passionate love)]

Shri Krishna says in the *Gita*:"*Vedanam Samvedosmi*" (of the Vedas, I am Samveda). That should explain the vital connection seen between music and spirituality. Devotional music, conforming to *Shastriya Sangeet*, is believed to be very helpful to the aspirant in his *sadhana*. It serves as an excellent aid to meditation on the Divine, a sure means of attaining effortless concentration on the chosen Deity. It is not without significance that majority of the great saints in all cultures and climes have been lovers of music. The instances of saint-singers across cultures are legion. What follows hereinafter is an account of how intimately I have known Bhagavaanji as a lover of music; he had a special ear for *Shastriya Sangeet*.

Decades back, precisely in the year 1944, some friends of mine and a few disciples, including shri Raghunathji Saproo (a postman by profession) and Shri Premnath Manvati, decided to visit the *Khirbhavani* shrine at Tulamula on the occasion of *Ashad Ashtami*. We started for the place a day before by a *donga* (a house-boat), carrying with us several musical instruments—a *sitar*, a pair of *tablas*, a *tanpura* and a harmonium. We reached Tulamula at 9 p.m. the same day. On the following morning, when it was *Ashtami*, we took a bath and then performed *pooja*. Thereafter I went to a *Halvai's* shop and borrowed a couple of mats from him. Who do I see in the shop besides the *Halvai*? A simple-looking person wearing a *pheran*, and a turban on his head, typifying a Kashmiri Pandit. He was absorbed in puffing at his *chillum*. Without paying much attention to him, I moved to a corner of the ground (around the temple) and spread the mats there, covering them with a blanket. My companions

and I sat on the spot for a while and then moved back into our *donga*. Having had our mid-day meal, we came back to our place and around 5 p.m. I again went to the shop mentioned earlier to purchase *naveed*—that is offered to the Deity and partly serves as a *prasad* for the devotees. The *Halvai* was engaged in frying *luchis* (considered tasty as oiled bread, especially when warm) and the turbaned man with the *chillum* noticed by me earlier was not seated in the shop that time. I then joined my companions at the spot we had selected. As the evening *Arti* began, we performed our *pooja*, offering roses and other kinds of flowers into the holy spring of *Ragnya Bhavani*. As the *Arti* was over, I again went to the *Halvai's* shop to pay for the things I had purchased. Once again I saw the turbaned Kashmiri smoking the *chillum*. Considering him an ordinary person, I left the shop and joined my companions in the boat to partake of dinner. We then shifted to our chosen spot, carrying with us the musical instruments we had brought with us from Srinagar.

At about 10 p.m. we began singing *bhajans* and *bols* based on *Shatriya Sangeet* and continued doing so throughout the night. There were several other *mandalis* as well engaged in singing *bhajans*, seated at various spots away from us. At about 1.30 a.m., as I was singing Tulsidas' *bhajan* "*Jai Jai Shri Rajkishori*" in the *raag Bhageshwari* accompanied by my disciple Chunilal on the harmonium and another disciple Sarwanand Langoo on the *tabla*, I noticed the turbaned Kashmiri (seen by me twice at the *Halvai's* shop) in the crowd of listeners, observing us from a distance for sometime, after which he left the spot. Perhaps he was noticed by me alone and not by anyone else. We stayed at the shrine till the morning of *Ashad Dashmi*. Before we left for srinagar, I did not see the Kashmiri again, whom I had seen with the *chillum* in his hands at the *Halvai's* shop.

One day in the month of *Ashad*, in the year 1946 (exactly two years after I had been to Tulamula, as narrated above), a man came to see me in Prem Sangeet Niketan, Kralakhud, Srinagar, as I was engaged in teaching my students *Shastriya Sangeet*. He conveyed to me that Master Shankar Pandit, celebrated scholar and educationist (known to have been a lover of music), wanted me to sing for a saint. Since I held Masterji in high regard, I entrusted my class to a senior disciple. Handing over the harmonium to the man who had brought me word from the Master, I also took a tabla-player along and was brought to a house in *Dalhasanyar*. I was shown into a room in which, to my surprise, I found the same man

that I had seen at Tulamula two years before, holding, as usual, the *chillum* in his hands. I thought to myself that it would be futile of me to sing *Shastriya-Sangeet* based songs for the man who would not comprehend classical music. I got a little perplexed over this. I found the few persons present in the room, including Master Shankar Pandit, addressing the man as '*Bab*'. So I saluted him. Then turning to Masterji with my hands folded, I started singing the *bhajans* of Mirabai, Kabirdas and Surdas, playing on the harmonium myself. Babji was deeply absorbed in puffing at the *chillum* and he looked occasionally at me. Finally, I sang Kabir Das's *bhajan* "*Mana lago mero yaar faqiri main*". I could see that Babji felt both delighted and excited over the *bhajan,* and looked at me frequently in applause. In the hightened state, he went on having puffs at his *Chillum*. I sang for about an hour and a half, and then rested. A lady brought us tea in the meanwhile and we all enjoyed sipping it in cups. I then sought permission from Master Shankar Pandit to leave. He pointed towards Babji. Taking the cue from his gesture, I sought the Bab's nod to let me go. He nodded his assent and so, bowing to him, I left the house along with my companion (carrying back our instruments to the Niketan). Then we dispersed and I came back home.

Those days I was posted as an establishment clerk in the Revenue Secretariat and would, as such, shift to Jammu for six months with the *Darbar* move. Before leaving for Jammu that year, I felt an urge to call on Babji. So, accompanied by two of my disciples, and equipped with the required instruments, I again visited Bhagavaanji's house at *Dalhasanyar* to sing for him. At about 7 p.m. I started singing *bhajans* in Hindi to the accompaniment of the harmonium (which I handled myself) ; my companions played on the other instruments. This time the number of the inmates was bigger than what it was on the earlier occasion. Hindi being accessible to them, they all enjoyed listening to the *bhajans* I sang. I left the house after obtaining Bab Maharaja's permission. Within a few days thereafter, I shifted to Jammu for six months. On my return to Srinagar, after another three months had elapsed, I one again felt a strong urge to have a *darshana* of Babji. I asked one of my pupils, who lived in the vicinity of *Dalhasanyar*, to enquire about the whereabouts of Bab Maharaj. He informed me, on the following day, that the saint had shifted to another house in Habbakadal area. Thereupon I directed a few of my pupils to find out his exact residential address. It was actually a Pandit shopkeeper, reported to be fond of saints, who informed me that 'Bhagavaan

Gopinathji' (whom I earlier knew as Bab Maharaj) lived then in his sister's house at Rishi Mohalla (behind Khardori mohalla). That is how I came to know of the saint's actual name, given to him at his birth by the family he was born into and also of the fact of his being called '*Bhagavaan*' by his votaries. I could not, however, make up my mind about seeing Bhagavaanji at his new residence because of some domestic preoccupations and the passing away of my father.

Later, probably in the month of August 1947, I did call on Bhagavaanji at his Rishi Mohalla residence (when I did not carry any instrument with me.) As the Bhagavaan looked at me, he smiled, which indicated that he recognized me. A *bhajan* in Kashmiri was being sung in chorus in his room at that time. I noticed Bhagavaanji performing the 'physical action' with his hands— holding a gun and aiming it at a target in the sky. I too was requested by those present to sing, but I declined the request politely, the reason being that there was no one around who would accompany me on the *tabla*. I accepted *prasad* from Bhagavaanji and left. That very year, in the month of October, during the days of the Dussehra festival, Kashmir was invaded by the *Kabailies* with the active connivance and support of Pakistan. Consequently, panic gripped the Valley and many Kashmiri Hindus fled away. I recollected the physical action I had noticed Bhagavaanji performing (mimicking a soldier holding the gun in his hands and aiming it at a target), signifying that he had foreseen the armed conflict between India and Pakistan. I narrated what I had seen the Bhagavaan doing to my friends and the members of my family.

Thereafter I continued seeing Bhagavaanji occasionally at his Rishi mohalla residence till 1951. Until that year, I had remained posted as an Accounts Clerk in the Rural Development Department, Srinagar. Sheikh Mohd. Abdullah headed the State Govt. then (as Prime Minister) and Mr. Kazmi was the Director of Education, who was a very cultured person. He was keenly interested in the promotion of Kashmiri *Sufiana* music which was in a state of decline and was fast dwindling. Mr. Kazmi desired this music to be reduced to notations. He consulted some musicians of Kashmir and several others from outside the State in this behalf, but could make no headway. There was one musician, well-versed in Sufiana music, Ustad Ramzan Joo, who, was in his early seventies. My

name too had been suggested to Kazmi Sahib by someone as the one who could be consulted in connection with the promotion and revival of Sufiana music. Kazmi Sahib called me to his residence, where I found Ramzan Joo also present, holding a small sitar in his hands. When Kazmi Sahib asked me if I could undertake the work he wanted accomplished (relating to notation) I replied that I would make the effort. I must say that it was because of Bhagavaanji's *kripa* that I had the confidence to take the difficult and challenging task in hand in collaboration with Ramzan Joo in the T.T. College, Magarmal Bagh, during the tenure of Mr. Ghulam Ahmed Mukhtar as the Principal of the College. It took me a full year to reduce 15 *muqams* of Sufiana music to notations. My manuscript was published by the state Govt. under the title 'Kashmiri *Mosiqi'* (Sargam). After Sheikh Abdullah Govt. was dismissed, Mr. A. Kazmi ceaed to be the Director of Education and he left the State. The work I had begun did not make any further progress.

Till the year 1955, I saw Bhagavaanji at the Rishi Mohalla residence a couple of times every month and occasionally entertained him with music. But certain domestic circumstances did not allow me to see Bhagavaanji for a period of two years until a day in 1958 when a stranger came to see me in my Institute and said, "Bhagavaanji asked me to go to Kralkhud, look for the music master there and convey to him that he should come to him. " I asked him if he was aware of the exact location of my Institute, to which he replied in the negative. It was Friday when the man guided me to Bhagavaanji's Chandapora residence. As I saluted the Bhagavaan, these words were whispered into my ear by him "Come here tomorrow at 9 p.m. for *bhajan*, bringing with you the four-stringed instrument (implying thereby the *tanpura*). " I was simply amazed at Bhagavaanji's awareness of the instrument. However, I did not tell any one of the 'tanpura' episode that had intrigued me.

On the next day my two disciples, Chunilal Ji and Dwarkanath Ji, accompanied me to Bhagavaanji's. We carried with us a pair of *tablas* and *tanpura* only. We found four other persons present in Bhagavaanji's room and began our sangeet at 8.30 p.m. He looked particularly pleased that night as he listened to the music. Perhaps he appreciated the Shastriya Sangeet for its classical purity—to be attributed to the use of *tanpura* (with the exclusion of the harmonium). We continued till 10 p.m. and then had rest for about an hour, during which we had our dinner. Resuming our musical session at 1 a.m., I sang my own *bol*, "*Ram nam baj re*

mana" in the *raag Kedar*. With the *chillum* in his hands, Bhagavaanji looked delighted and heartily enjoyed the song. I noticed him talking to himself in whispers; then I switched to Rajeshwari *raag* in which I sang another *bandish* of mine '*Raj Rajeshwari Mata Bhavani* '. For about 45 minutes I sang in slow rhythm; as I changed to fast rhythm, within a few minutes Bhagavaanji snatched the *tanpura* from me and making a sign to me to continue singing, started playing on the stringed instrument with the four fingers of his right hand. Having handled the *tanpura* for about 10 minutes, he handed it back to me and I finished the song in a short time. Bhagavaanji went down and was back in within 20 minutes or so, resumed his seat, tied his turban afresh, put the vermilion mark on his forehead and began making offerings into the *dhooni*. He signed to me to resume singing. Appropriate to the hour, I began Ram Kali 'Khayal' in both slow and fast tunes. Being my own composition as all the earlier ones, its *bol*, as framed by me, was '*Hari Hari Jap Le bande, na-shwar jag sara*'. I sang it upto six in the morning, had a little rest and then begged leave of Bhagavaanji and left.

In the year 1958, my wife gave birth to a male child. When about a year old, it fell very ill one day. I dashed to Bhagavaanji's at about 9 p.m. and only kept on looking towards him as a supplicant. He placed his right leg on the window sill, and then his left leg alongside it. Looking towards me, he spoke these words (as if to himself) "This child has to attend an urgent business somewhere else; it cannot linger here". After a while , I took leave of Bhagavaanji and left. The child passed away at midnight. My wife calmed down when I narrated to her what had passed between me and Bhagavaanji.

In June 1961, I was hospitalized for the treatment of a duodenal ulcer. My wife informed me that during the period of my hospitalization, she had called on Bhagavaanji after every two or three days and obtained *bhasm* and *prasad* on each occasion which she would give me in the hospital. She narrated further that one day she had wept bitterly before the Bhagavaan. He had only looked towards her and said (as if talking to himself) "The master (meaning myself, the present writer) had a few grains of *mong* (pulses) bequeathed to him by his mother, which are now exhausted. There is no danger ahead." The meaning of his words was immediately clear to me: my mother had died of duodenal ulcer when I was just a year old. According to what Bhagavaanji rightly divined, my mother's disease had 'passed on to me' and had to be suffered by me for the

period I was hospitalized. His words were prophetic inasmuch as I was cured of the ulcer through the operation.

In the month of August 1967, two army officers, one of the rank of Colonel and the other of Captain, came to see me at the Institute, accompanied by my disciple Shri Chunilal, who was employed in the Ordnance Depot., Badamibagh, Srinagar. The Colonel sought my help in having some items of drama and music rehearsed and performed in connection with the celebration of the Independence Day. Assisted by my disciple, I had the items practised by the participants concerned and rehearsed for the occasion for 3 to 4 days; they were presented by them on the 15th of August from 4 to 7 p.m. Then we had our dinner together. The Colonel offered me a glass of whisky which I declined, telling him that I had never taken an alcoholic drink in my life.

Within a few days of this event, my disciple Chunilal's wife fell very ill and in spite of treatment, did not recover. The doctors almost lost all hopes of her survival. I advised Chunilal to seek Bhagavaanji's blessings; so we both called on him. Chunilal pressed Bhagavaanji's feet and after some time the Bhagavaan gave him some *bhasm* wrapped in a piece of paper. He also spoke some words to him, which I did not catch. Chunilal's wife got perfectly well within a few days with Bhagavaanji's grace. After about a month, Chunilal proposed to me that since his wife had recovered from a serious illness through Bhagavaanji's *kripa* we should some day entertain him with our *bhajans*. I readily agreed and taking the *tanpura* etc. with us on a Friday, we went to Bhagavaanji's at 10 p.m. and bowed to him in his room. We found Shri Ved Lal Vakil and his companion, Shri Badrinath Munshi, entertaining Bhagavaanji with *sufiana* music to the accompaniment of the *santoor*. As Vedlalji finished singing, he expressd happiness on my visit saying "now that Masterji has also come we shall enjoy singing heartily". We had our food; Vedlalji joined Bhagavaanji in smoking the *chillum*. He then resumed Kashmiri *sufiana* singing. Meanwhile Bhagavaanji tucked his legs under him, rested his head on the pillow to his right and fell asleep. Vedlalji continued singing till 2 a.m. but Bhagavaanji would not wake up, to the disappointment of the singer. As he finished singing, he said to me despairingly, "Bhagavaannji does not wake up and so smoking has stopped. Please begin your *Shastriya Sangeet* for a while". I took up the *tanpura* and started Mira's *bhajan* "*Paga ghungru bandha mira nachi re*" in the *raag* Malkauns. Just within a few minutes Bhagavaanji woke up and looking

towards me, filled the *chillum.* He puffed at it to his fill. The *bhajan* was over in about 40 minutes and then Bhagavaanji passed on the *chillum* to me, asking me to smoke. I had only one puff and returned the *chillum* to the Bhagavaan, who in turn handed it over to Vedalalji. Then Bhagavaanji took out a big bottle of whisky from behind the pillow and staring at me in anger said,"never again drink acid." I recalled the scene of carousal at Badamibagh (where the Colonel had wanted me to drink and I had just tasted a few drops) and realized I was being admonished by Bhagavaanji and that I should abstain from drinking in the interest of my well-being.

In the year 1966, I signed a contract for presenting musical items at the Exhibition theatre. When I came home, I rėalized I had committed a blunder in accepting the assignment. How would I take my young pupils, including girls, to the exhibition in the evenings and hold them there from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. daily for a month or so ? I was particularly apprehensive that the parents of my pupils might feel annoyed and unhappy. But there was no help now as I had signed the contract. I turned inwardly to Bhagavaanji and then presented myself to him later as a 'petitioner' in his 'august darbar' in all humility. The 'exhibition' problem was haunting my mind. Only within a few minutes Bhagavaaanji looked towards me smilingly and spoke in a monologue" there is nothing to worry. All will be well automatically". The Exhibition started and I took my pupils, including a few girls, in a Government van to the Exhibition grounds. The juniors sang a couple of songs in chorus followed by drama programme. When we were about to leave, a number of visitors, all youngsters including boys and girls, met me and offered to sing songs in the theatre as amateurs during the term of my assignment. I gave them a green signal and they started coming from the next day itself. With the grace of Bhagavaanji, the youngsters from among my pupils did not get their turn to sing. From the third day, the show was mostly run by the visitors. On the whole the programme was a complete success, thanks to the spontaneous cooperation extended to me by the visitors. It is my firm conviction that I tided over the difficulty because of Bhagavaanji's help. Thus the Prem Sangeet Niketan and I as its incharge, were saved from an embarrassing situation.

One Friday in April, 1968, a man was sent by Bhagavaanji to my Institute and I, losing no time, proceeded to his residence accompanied by my two disciples as usual. It was 9 p.m. and I found only 2 to 3 persons around Bhagavaanji in his room. We had our food as desired by him

and then I began to sing. Bhagavaanji himself did not have any food and remained busy with the *chillum.* I continued to sing till 2 a.m., had tea and resumed singing. At about 4 a.m.Bhagavaanji, as was his habit, went down to the compound. He spent some time in the toilet, washed his face etc. and came up, tied his turban into the right shape and put a vermilion mark on his forehead. Soon he began puffing at his *chillum.* I sang *raag* 'Jogia' the *bol* being "Jaag jaag jogia, Moh jal maya tyag nindya" in *vilambit* (slow) and *drut* (fast) tunes, till 6 a.m. As was my wont, I chose the time to take leave of Bhagavaanji. Unlike the previous occasions, he declined my request, shaking his head in dissent, thus making it obligatory for me to continue singing. So I sang, *"Bairagi baba avo ghar alakh jagavo"* in the *raag* Bairagi Bhairav. I finished the song at 7 a.m. and sought Bhagavaanji's permission to leave. Meanwhile, pointing towards a *gadvi* (a metallic pot), Bhagavaanji asked a lady to prepare *lassi* ; my companions and I had a glassful of it each. He then took out some money from his pocket and sent someone to get bread for us from a baker's shop. We were persuaded by Bhagavaanji to stay on. Apart from breakfast, we got some *prasad* from the Bhagavaan and packing our things, we left for our homes.

This was my last meeting with Bhagavaanji. One day, a few weeks later, I was going to my office on a bicycle. As I reached Habbakadal, I heard people saying that the Sadguru had left his mortal frame. I turned back and rushed to Bhagavaanji's residence at Chandapora. I found a large congregation of people there. After the religious rites were performed, I joined thousands of devotees, who formed themselves into a funeral procession and moved towards the cremation ground at Karan Nagar. I recalled how Bhagavaanji had detained us at his residence till 8 a.m. when I sang for him last (on earlier occasions we had never stayed there beyond 6 a.m.). In deviating from the normal practice, the Bhagavaan had, I believe, given us an indication of his approaching Mahasamadhi!

I don't consider myself competent to say anything authoritatively about Bhagavaanji's spiritual stature. With my limited intellect, I can only say as a believer that he was *'Ishwarsarup'*, a *trikaladrashta yogi* of a high order. Yes, I found him different from innumerable other saints whom I met in Kashmir and other parts of the country during my long carrer as a *Shastriya Sangeetkar* (musician). Of all the saints with whom I spent nights devoted to music, I found Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji, a *Gyani, Mahatma* and *yogi* of a category apart. Ordinary people do not appreciate

Shastriya Sangeet. On the other hand they have an ear for light and folk music. It is not merely the classical singer who is expected to have knowledge of *sur* (pitch) and *tal* (rhythm); the receptive listener too invariably has some awareness or knowledge of the niceties involved in music. How surprising that in the soltitude of night, when there would only be 2-3 persons in Bhagavaanji's room, he remained absorbed in music and enjoyed listening to *Shastriya Sangeet* for hours together and kept awake. Of this aspect of his personality—his being an ardent lover of music—most devotees have been unaware. On an average, the Bhagavaan would send someone to me twice every month and listen to my *Shastriya Sangeet* on Saturday nights with just a few persons around.

I continue to be registered as a devotee of Bhagavaanji in the official records of the Bhagavaan's Trust. And as his devotee, I am striving hard to attain inward peace through regular meditation at his holy feet. As a lover of music, having had the privilege of spending some precious hours of my life in the divine presence of the great Master, I take pride in considering myself an ordinary singer of his 'darbar'.

In conclusion, I should like to say that I see the unseen hand of Bhagavaanji in having been persuaded by Prof. A.N. Dhar to write this article. I consider this veritably an instance of divine prompting. I should add that Prof. Dhar too is fond of music, associated with the Prem Sangeet Niketan as a well-wisher.

THE INSCRUTABLE GODMAN

—G. N. Raina

A mystic tradition has it that a divine government functions and oversees the working of human affairs without a break—with, of course, a change in the personnel from time to time. This, perhaps, explains why we have had a galaxy of *avtars* and prophets, saints and sages, thinkers and philosophers blessing our mother earth at particular points of time in the history of our planet, if only to guide humanity and put it on the right course.

In the centuries-old spiritual history of the world, we have had Rama establish the rule of moral law, Krishna expound the fundamentals of perennial philosophy, Buddha emphasize the evanescence of the phenomenal world and compassion for the living, Socrates sacrifice his life at the altar of truth, Christ, the son of God, live, serve and suffer for mankind, Zoroaster incarnate the never-ending duel between vice and virtue, Confucius ennunciate the ethical postulates, Mohammed, the spiritual giant of Arabia, teach us the principle of self-surrender to God and Gandhi advocate the concept of non-violence and passive resistance to evil.

King of Saints

While all countries and nations have had their share of great seers and savants, Kashmir has had a long array of mystics, faqirs and godmen. The names that come to one's mind, among others, are Lalleshwari, Nund Rishi, Rupa Bhavani, Rishi Peer, Anandji, Jeevan Sahib, Sati Ded, Kashkak, Nandlal and, last but not the least, Bhagavaan Gopinath. His pre-eminence as a great spiritual master was recognised during his life time and he was believed to be "the king of the then divine set-up in Kashmir".

Few among the contemporary saints of Kashmir left as indelible an impression on the minds of the people as Bhagavaan Gopinath. His pre-eminence as a great spiritual master was duly recognised by two of his contemporaries, the highly venerated mystics—Kashkak and Nandlal. The latter described him as "the king of the then divine set-up in Kashmir".

The sage led a simple, austere life. He covered himself with anonymity, never moved out of Kashmir and did not deliver any sermons. A mystic with a healing touch, he brought solace to those stricken with malignant diseases.

He induced spirituality in his devotees by mere touch or by a mere glance or by sharing with them his smoke. Each received his grace according to his/her capacity. He often told the seekers of truth that intense personal effort and the grace of the Guru were the essential prerequisites of God-realization. He abhorred lackadaisical form of worship which he thought was like moving under the shade of willow trees.

The very nerves of saints like Bhagavaan Gopinath overflow with inexhaustible energy and their hearts pour out a perennial stream of bliss all around. There was no Hindu, no Musalman, no Christian for him. He treated all equally irrespective of caste, creed or colour. An embodiment of compassion for all those who sought his grace, Bhagavaanji has been and continues to be an unfailing source of comfort to the afflicted souls, assuaging the throbbing pain of their anguished hearts. Men and women, young and old, the educated and the unlettered, the believers and the agnostics would visit him in and out of season to receive his blessings.

A mystic with a healing touch, Bhagavaan Gopinath brought solace to those stricken with malignant diseases. Often, he would give holy ash from his *dhooni* to cure ailments like tuberculosis, brain *haemorrhage* and mental disorders.

Bhagavaan's Mission

We are passing through very critical times. Materialism has taken a firm hold over our minds, particularly the young. The moral and spiritual values are on the wane. The need to move from the outer to the inner life, to coordinate the scientific temper and the spiritual approach and to restore the efficacy of our ancient ethical, cultural and spiritual perspectives, has never been greater than it is now. And in this task, saints like Bhagavaan Gopinath show us the way, dispel fear from our minds and inculcate in us the much-needed faith and love.

One may recall Bhagavaanji's promise to redeem humanity, which he revealed to Philip Simpfendorfer of Australia in meditation on February 15, 1978, about 10 years after the sage had passed into eternity. "In every land, we seek people who will stand like immovable rocks against

the dark ocean of destruction.... we do not interfere with religions. We want the well being of the world" he said.

Not bound by the limitations of time and space, Bhagavaanji has been munificent in answering sincere prayers anywhere any time. Perfect masters like him can materialize and dematerialize themselves and move with the velocity of light and utilize the creative light rays in bringing into instant visibility any physical manifestation. In 1947, he was heard asking in one of his soliloquies: "What is our army doing? Why are they not opening a direct route to Kashmir for Lamas?" And wonder of wonders, the Indian army did set up a direct link with Ladakh in 1948 after taking over Zoji La Pass and Kargil. A military police officer connected with this operation was informed by the Front Commander that a mysterious person directed the operations. Later, the said police officer visited Bhagavaan Gopinath in Srinagar and confirmed that the saint exactly answered to the description given by the Front Commander.

Fifty years later, Bhagavaanji again directed the recent operations in the Tiger Hills, particularly at a time when the going was tough for the Indian Army which was strategically placed in an extremely disadvantageous position. We have it on the explicit evidence of an officer of the Grenadiers, who, in his personal diary (excerpts published in *Excelsior* in Jammu), testifies that on July 3, 1999, the incredible figure in his traditional Kashmiri attire appeared on the scene and what followed was "an all-night 11-hour assault by the Indian troops, leading to the recapture of the Tiger Hills on July 4, 1999". By now it is a piece of history and the saint-directed operation proved to be a turning point in the 40-day-old Kargil conflict.

Living Presence

There is, however, a very thin line that can be drawn between his life before and after leaving the mortal coil. Bhagavaan Gopinath is as much alive today as he was in flesh and blood, ever steering the course of our lives. While many of us, like the present writer, have had the good fortune of seeing him in the blissful human form, those who did not, need not despair for the saint in his astral form has been appearing in dream or in meditation to spiritual aspirants.

It is now surprising that a mere glance at his portrait gives to the man of faith the feeling of the presence of a living reality. He seems to talk through his lustrous and penetrating eyes. His angelic countenance takes charge of one's afflicted heart and fills it with ineffable joy and bliss.

[Reprinted from the November, 1999 issue of the *Koshur Samachar* with due acknowledgements]

Kargil Diary—V
'BHAGAVAAN' GOPINATH DIRECTED, INDIAN COMMANDOS ACTED

—B.L. Kak

"Unbelievable sight, Unforgettable character." These words find place on the first page of the unfinished diary on the Kargil war by a young officer of the Indian Army. Of course, he has fascinating, thrilling pieces of information on the war as it raged to free the Tiger Hills form the Pakistani guerrillas. But he admits his "failure" to hammer out a convincing answer to his own question: How did this happen?

A hurried look at certain portions of the diary clearly indicated the size and pattern of the conflict the Army officer has even after the victory of Indians over Pakistan following the eviction of the armed guerrillas from the all-important Tiger Hills. "True, Indian jawans fought very well in this particular section of Kargil sector. But our action followed the direction from the great man, who died many years ago in Srinagar", the officer said.

The great man? "None other than the famous Kashmiri Pandit saint, who was, and is, for his followers 'Bhagavaan Gopinath", the officer replied.

Did he meet him when he was alive? The officer's reply: "A Kashmiri Hindu officer of another formation wears a gold locket bearing the picture of the saint. Not long ago, this Kashmiri officer visited my family in Lucknow. And during our informal meeting with him, I and my wife learnt from him about the supernatural powers of the saint,'Bhagavaan' Gopinath. About a month later, a colour photograph of the saint was delivered in our house by the Kashmiri Army officer".

There were quite a few casualties on the Indian side during the first three days of Indian offensive against the Pakistani guerrillas in the rugged vicinity of Tiger Hills. In the Tiger Hills, the 16,000 feet high conical feature in the Dras sector, the Indian troops encountered enormous difficulties, even as certain substantial

gains had been registered with the launching of a multi-pronged attack.

"Our re-structured strategy bore fruit only after the unbelievable sight, unforgettable character emerged on Saturday, July 3, 1999. Appearance on the scene of 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath, wearing white turban and a red *tilak* on his forehead, was suddenly, and swiftly, followed by the equally unbelievable energy in the muscle-power of each and every Indian fighter", the unfinished diary says.

The diary adds: "Perhaps, nobody would believe what I came across after the fierce, all-night, 11-hour assault, leading to the re-capture of the Tiger Hills. The super-man, 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath led the assault". The re-capture of the Tiger Hills, the most dominating peak in the Kargil region, was undoubtedly a turning point in the 40-day old conflict.

And by the time the Indian tri-colour was hoisted atop Tiger Hills, another event of much importance had taken place in the Batalik sector. It was the capture of a Pakistani soldier, Naik Inayat Ali (service number 2837712) of 5 Northern Light Infantry (NLI), which is part of 62nd brigade based in Skardu. And Inayat Ali told his interrogators that most of the infiltrators were regulars of the Pak Army.

With a view to eliminating enemy observation of National highway, Tiger Hills had to be freed from the Pak guerrillas. Indian Air Force jets had pounded the two enemy supply camps on the hills with devastating effect till July 2 afternoon before ground troops launched the final assault. The final assault on the Tiger Hills was carried out by troops of 18 Grenadiers.

Obviously, the defeat suffered by the Pakistani occupation forces around the Tiger Hills resulted in a new signal for Islamabad necessitating Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharief, to hold one-to-one talks with the US President Mr. Bill Clinton, in Washington on Sunday July 4. A day earlier, Mr. Clinton extended an invitation to Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee to visit Washington for talks. Mr. Clinton extended the invitation when he talked to Mr. Vajpayee over the telephone late on Saturday (July 3) night.

If Mr. Nawaz Sharief took the next available flight to

Washington after he received a message from the US President, Mr. Vajpayee turned down Mr. Bill Clinton's invitation. Mr. Vajpayee told Mr. Clinton that it would not be possible for him to visit the US "at this stage"

Mr. Nawaz Sharef rushed to the US on Saturday night to hold discussions with Mr. Clinton on the Kargil crisis. All this at a time when the Pak Prime Minister faced increasing isolation from tne international community on the Kargil front. And by the time Mr Nawaz Sharief boarded the Washington bound plane, artillery cover was provided to the Indian ground troops who were slowly moving up Tiger Hills to mount the attack from various sides.

It was the day (July 4) Nostradamus, the 15th century seer, had predicted that the world would end. As it turned out, it was glorious day for India. Pakistan got humiliated after the brave men of the Indian Armed Forces captured the strategic Tiger Hills—and nabbed a Pakistani soldier to boot.

Hidden 'hero' of Kargil hills—I
PAKISTAN'S SUDDEN INTEREST IN KASHMIR'S 'MIRACLE-MAN'

—B. L. Kak

Stated opposition by Pakistan to Dr. Farooq Abdullah's proposal for bringing about Kashmiri Hindu migrants' return to the Valley notwithstanding, a measure of interest has suddenly—and, indeed, unexpectedly—been evinced by Islamabad in Kashmir's miracle-man', Pandit Gopinath, who, though dead and gone, has triggered animated discussions and generated a good deal of curiosity following the circulation of a media report about his role as the 'hero' of Kargil hills during the Indo-Pakistan war of the 1999 summer.

The report was highlighted by *Daily Excelsior*, a leading English newspaper of Jammu and Kashmir. In fact, Pakistan Embassy's attention, a diplomat admitted, was drawn by the report's heading: 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath directed, Indian commandos acted. The Pakistani diplomat, with out any fanfare, got into touch with a Kashmiri Muslim scribe, perhaps days after he went through the Kargil articles carried by the J&K publication, to obtain information about the 'miracle-man'

Since all these articles had been authored by me at the end of my visit to parts of Kargil region before the end of the war, I was not surprised when the Kashmiri Muslim journalist contacted me to confirm unidentified Indian Army officer's statement on how the 'miracle-man' appeard on the scene to guide the troops during their drive to drive out the Pakistani intruders form the Tiger Hills. And the soft-mannered journalist straightaway told me that he had been contacted by a functionary of the Pakistani chancery in this regard.

What was quite surprising was the piece of information: Unidentified Pakistani official knew about the existence of 'Bhagavaan Gopinath Ashram' in New Delhi's Pamposh Enclave. Indeed, the Pakistan chancery had got details about the office-bearers of this centre. As a diplomatic move, the chancery sought

the help of a Kashmiri-speaking "friend" to get into touch with Kashmiri-speaking office-bearers of the centre. Neither the Muslim journalist nor this writer had any knowledge about anyone operating for and within the Delhi-based 'Bhagavaan Gopinath Ashram'. Hence, the Pak official had no other alternative but to accept a couple of printed booklets on this 'miracle-man', which contained necessary material on the 'king of saints in Kashmir', namely, 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath.

Again, the Pak official could not accomplish his another target, namely, obtaining identity of the Indian officer of 18 Grenadiers, who after the defeat of the Pak attackers in the vicinity of the Tiger Hills, had briefly talked about the appearance of 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath as the 'real director' for Indian actors on the eve of the victory of Indian troops in the recapture of the Tiger Hills. Since this particular Army officer wanted to remain anonymous, I had to adopt 'mother-knows-best' policy on this issue.

The same policy was used when a top official from the Army Headquarters contacted me to know the name of the 'Chap' from 18 grenadiers, who had spread the story of the dead saint having guided him and his men during their assault on the Pakistani attackers in the vicinity of Tiger Hills. The Chief of the Army Staff, Gen VP Malik, he informed me was anxious to know about the 'chap'

The top Army official was forced to change the topic when he was told: The dead saint, according to some war heroes of the Indian Army, was seen on the battlefront guiding the troops in Kashmir against Pak invaders during the 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan. In the words of Swami Yogananda, the author of "The Autobiography of a Yogi', perfect masters like 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath "can materialise and dematerialise themselves and move with the velocity of light and utilise the creative light rays in bringing into instant visibility any physical manifestation".

Considering the fact that scores of functionaries in the Defence Ministry and Army Headquarters as well as at the Udhampur-based Northern Command have suddenly grown curious to know about the 'powers' of the man who is no longer alive, it would be in fitness of things if Lt. Col. R.K Langar is approached

by them individually or collectively for his views and findings on the man, who is now called by a group within the Indian Army as the hidden 'hero' of the Kargil hills.

And as long as some higher-ups considered close to the Army Chief Gen. Malik, are found to be having 'ego', self-realisation is not possible. In fact Lt. Col. Langar has, in one of the articles, quoted 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath as having said that one should wholly get rid of the 'ego'. In line with the teachings of Kashmir Saivism, 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath believed in both 'knowledge' and 'activity'. Hence, a word of caution for his critics: Don't dismiss the man without studying his approach and actions till he breathed his last. To acquire 'knowledge' in this connection will obviously require activity.

(To be concluded)

Hidden 'hero' of Kargil hills—II
SOLDIERS SAW HIM AT THE FRONT IN ALL INDO-PAK WARS

—B. L. Kak

New Delhi, Sept 11: Pakistan, a party to the Kashmir 'dispute', is a Muslim State and will not easily permit a debate on the departed saints of Kashmir, particularly on the printed stuff with regard to the 'direction' from well-known Pandit spiritualist, 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath, to Indian soldiers during their battle against Pakistanis in 1947-48, 1965 and 1971 and lately in Kargil region. Significantly, however, printed material on the man, under reference, has been obtained by Delhi-based Pakistan chancery.

There is no reaction from Pakistani functionaries on the hidden 'hero' of Kargil hills. Perhaps, those who obtained the written stuff on 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath chose to uphold the observation made by Henry David: "Jumping to conclusions does n't make for happy landings".

Prof J.N. Sharma's findings seemed to have egged at least two Pakistani officials, currently based in Delhi; on to ascertain from "other sources" if 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath was really seen by Indian soldiers at the front in 1948 and just in front of them, directing them to fire in this or that direction, even as he was, at that time, seated in his room in Srinagar. "Other sources"? "Our sources are sacred and, hence, we don't want to expose them", pat came the reply from one of these officials.

Prof Sharma's findings are contained in a 32-page booklet, which has been published by Mr. Pran Nath Koul, Delhi-based secretary of "Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Trust". Finding number one: From 1947 onwards, 'Bhagavaan' Ji took much interest in what was happening around him, and used his spiritual power to help the country. His body was no hurdle in his going any-where. Once, he said that he was himself present at the battle-front, and so there was no danger to Kashmir though, again, he was physically in Srinagar.

Finding number two: During the border war with China in 1962, 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath once left his residence and returned the next day. His body was quite cold. He had caught a chill and

had bronchitis. In answer to a question by a devotee, he said that he had gone to Tibet to settle the matters. In a few days, there was lasting ceasefire. He kept a close eye on the 1965 war also.

Finding number three: In 1971, India got actively involved in the Bangladesh war of liberation. At a critical stage in the war, a superpower announced its involvement. One of its very powerful naval fleets was nearing the Bengal coast. People got panicky. The senior disciples and devotees at the Srinagar Ashram were greatly worried. Prof. Sharma has quoted Mr. P.N. Kaul, a 'senior' disciple, as saying that 'Bhagavaan' Ji appeared before one of them in his astral form in response to their prayers, and directed that particular object should be offered jointly by them as an oblation at the Ashram before the evening *aarti* for four days. That was done and, just at the conclusion of the fourth day's *homa* (offering oblations), the news came over the radio that the enemy troops had surrendered.

'Bhagavaan' Gopinath lived in eleven different houses including his ancestral house. These included the house of a niece of his at Chandpora in Srinagar where he gave up the mortal frame on May 28, 1968. Prop. Sharma has placed himself on record by saying that 'Bhagavaan' Ji after giving up the gross body, has been helping spiritual aspirants in, and outside, India. In 1986,' Bhagavaan' Ji made himself visible in his effulgent astral form before Raymond Garden of Sydney. Since then, he and Yonne Houley, another Australian devotee who had had a vision of 'Bhagavaan' Ji, have been meditating on his 'pure light'.

Prof. Sharma's finding number four: Among 'Bhagavaan' Ji's disciples and devotees are many who never saw him in his life-time. These include some in other countries like Australia, the USA, Canada, Switzerland and the UK. That is why he has come to be called a Jagadguru, a world spiritual leader. According to Prof. Sharma 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath once fasted for a month with the specific purpose of extending by a year the life-span of a man, whose children still needed his attention.

Well-researched is prof. Kashi Nath Dhar's book titled Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji of Kashmir: The Saint of All Times, which has covered the multi-dimensional facets of the saint's benign personality. Prof Dhar says that 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath was an "introvert", always engrossed with his inner life, and has, therefore, posed a sphinx-like problem" to us as to the exact purport of the

subliminal plane on which he was stationed". Even though his temporal life seemed to be an open book, yet the urgency and utility of reading between its lines can in no way be ruled out, Prof Dhar has argued.

Prop Kashi Nath Dhar is quite on the mark when he also argues that it needs to be conceded that such obscure and unintelligible medium used by 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath will naturally lead to wild-goose-chase of inferences, corollaries and guesses, which can at times be baffling, deluding and far removed from reality. It might in the final analysis connote an exercise in futile kite-flying even. "Therefore, I have chosen to steer safe between sentimental involvement and hyperbolic over-statement", he says and adds: 'Emotional attachment often blurs the exact image of such towering souls as Bhagavaan Ji was".

(concluded)

MAYOR SCHUNDLER PROCLAIMS JULY 26, 1997 AS JAGADGURU BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI DAY

—Matie Singh (Asia Observer)

New Jersey—The Birth Centenary Celebration of Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji was held at Govinda Mandir on Newark Avenue in Jersey City, New Jersey on Saturday, July 26, 1997.

Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji was "one of the most eminent saints who ever graced India and the world," said Mr. Surinder Zutshi, founder of Kashmir Solidarity USA. Gopinathji was considered a "Jeevanmukta" having attained liberation while still in the gross body. He "never moved out" from the land of "Kashmir," and was a "Sidda." After attaining such a high level of spirituality, it is said that his life was a beautiful blend of "*Jnana* (Knowledge), *Bhakti* (devotion), and *Karma* (action)," Mr. Zutshi said.

Among invited dignitaries were the local Jersey City Indian community leader, who has been serving the community for twenty-six years now, Mr. Mono R. Sen; Deputy General Council, Mr. Kailash Aggarwal; a gynaecologist and veteran local politician, Dr. Lalitha Masson; a founding member of the National Federation of Indian Associates, Mr. Manual Gupta, and the chief guests-of-honour were Dr. Sunil Jaitly and Mrs. Rupal Jaitly.

Enthusiastically attended by about 150 people, the centenary celebration was organised by the Kashmir Solidarity USA as a result of the generous sponsorship of Dr. Sunil Jaitly and Mrs. Rupal Jaitly, and is being simultaneously celebrated throughout India, Australia. U.S., Britain and Canada.

The special puja celebration began with jap (chanting) of His Holiness, Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji's name 108 times, followed by specially composed *bhajans* by a group of elder female devotees. The recital and *bhajans* were then followed by a most profound address by Mr. Sen to the devotees in attendance. The *satsang* lasted for about one and a half hour.

In the midst of the solemn *pujas* and *bhajans*, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Mono R.Sen who stated," It is very important for the younger generation to learn the value system we Indians have been cherishing for the last six-thousand years because in the long run without this heritage they will be lost". He further added: "As their community leader, I tell them including the Americans, to follow the Indian heritage, culture and history and read about it. The Americans discuss the existence of God, we don't, we experience the existence of god".

As chief guest-of-honour, Dr. Jaitly cited a few words from the *Bhagavad Gita*, and was happy to be present among the devotees. He said, "It is a great honour to be part of this event in celebrating the centenary of Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji who gave up his gross body in 1968." Speaking with great inspiration Dr. Jaitly said, "We need a *satsang* (company of devotees of god). It's a must. *Bina Satsang Vivek Na Hoya* (without good company you can't achieve the power of discrimination)," at which point he referred to the Bhagavaan's teachings and commented on his contribution to society.

"Bhagavaan Gopinathji spent half of his life achieving the Supreme and the rest in service to His people as compassionate father and a silent commander," says Dr. Jaitly as his quaint, gracious wife, Mrs. Rupal Jaitly, looked on with visible affection. "Bhagavaanji had a mission: to help those in distress by his miraculous powers. He has purified the faithful and with His all-pervading spirit continues to guide the needy and the deserving. The lord endowed Him with great powers of futurology, clairvoyance and instant means to heal and solve problems of His devotees."

Dr. Jaitly, held the audience spell-bound with his vivid quotations from the works on Gopinathji, he continued, "Bhagavaan Gopinathji, said 'One's own hard work and the guru's grace are both very essential to God-realisation.' On His being an introvert he said, 'A yogi may realize God but an introvert can realise all the aspects of God.' He taught that the real *Siddi* lies in total communion with the supreme creator, *Param Brahma*. This great personality who never left His place of birth, the valley of Kashmir is not just an asset of Kashmir but of the whole world".

He acknowledged the presence of India's Deputy General Council, and thanked him for coming. He also thanked Mr. Gupta, advisor to Governor of New Jersey, Ms. Christine Todd Whitman, and all others present. He said, "I thank you all for being here today to share with one another our Guru's teachings and philosophy. I commend the executive committee of Kashmir Solidarity, USA and Mr. Surinder Zutshi, founder of Kashmir Solidarity, USA for his efforts to put together this celebration. I hope with the blessing of 'Bhagavaan' Gopinath all continue to organize such meaningful events in the future. As always let the Great soul bestow His benign grace and bliss on all His disciples. Namaskar".

A proclamation received from the Mayor of Jersey City's office which read" I, Bret Schundler, Mayor of the City of Jersey City, do hereby proclaim July 26, 1997 as Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji Day," was presented to Mr. Surinder Zutshi. Still engrossed with the excitement of the event so far, the program was further elevated by the lighting of two *diyas* by India's Deputy General Council, Mr. Kailash Aggarwal and Dr. Jaitly.

One notable familiar gesture of homeland humility witnessed by all was that of India's Deputy General Council Mr. Aggarwal, who, upon entering the Mandir, along with the other honoured guest, respectfully sat on the floor.

DCG Aggarwal briefly addressed the gathering and he said: "I believe greatly in the Indian Philosophy. I believe that in the Indian philosophy and Indian system we have these great masters who come from time to time and they cleanse the system". Elaborating further Mr. Aggarwal said: "I do not think that they (great masters) promote a new philosophy, they give it a new orientation. The basic thrust of the philosophy remains the same."

Dr. Lalitha Masson, smiling ever so gracefully speaking to the reporter said, "Programs like this are the nucleus for promoting *bhakti* which is lacking in the Western society. For the youngsters just from observation they will fall in line. We have a lot to offer to the Western society," as she tried to overcome the background noise of the *aarti*. "The west offer excellence in education, but it's pure knowledge, which is superficial. There is no *bhakti* in Western education. And *bhakti* is a part of life. Indians

offer a combination of knowledge and *Bhakti* which leads to a structured and modern way of life."

In a letter sent by the Trustee, Mr. Ashok Khushu. from Bhagavaan Sri Gopinathji Ashram, in Pamposh Encalve, New Delhi, India, to Mr. Surinder Zutshi, it was stated "Bhagavaanji was the *Aghora* whose Mind, body and Soul were in unison with the universal elements. Bhagavaanji's stage was equivalent to the place where thousands of Suns with their radiations glow together. We once again send you and all the devotees, Mr. Hari Tikoo, Mr. Avtar Matoo,Dr. M.K. Raina, Dr. Asha Samant, Dr. Lalitha Masson, Dr. G.L. Kachroo, Dr. Chaman Kashkari and all others the blessings and good wishes."

Though the official program ended, the older gentleman continued with the offerings of special *bhajans* while *prasadam* of *halva* and *puris* was served to devotees.

Overall, the birth centenary of Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji was a shining, proud success for a cross-section of Indians, and yet another testament to the love and devotion of our great *Indian culture* though we live here in America.

RELEASE OF POSTAL STAMP ON BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI :

(A Brief Report on the Event)

—Sohan Krishen Khurdi

Among the highlights that marked the year-long celebration of Bhagavaanji's birth centenary, the release of a commemorative postal stamp on him by the Department of Posts, Govt. of Inida, was an event of considerable significance. Hosted by the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust, Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi, the programme was held on Friday, the 3rd of July, 1998 at the F.I.C.C.I. Auditorium, New Delhi.

The function received wide publicity in the country and a fair coverage in a number of national papers. It began at 5.30 p.m. sharp with the arrival of the Union Communications and Information & Broadcasting Minister, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj. The auditorium was packed with the audience that consisted of a large number of devotees, guests including special invitees to the function, and media persons. The Welcome Address was delivered by Shri Pran Nath Kaul, Secretary of the Trust. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj releasing the stamp priced at Rs.3/- said it was unfortunate that while the day was being observed all over India and abroad, circumstances did not allow such a function to be held in Srinagar, Bhagavaanji's birth place. Describing the Bhagavaan as a leading light for the Community and the country, she observed that he had taught universal love and brotherhood, and through his *sadhana* preached against the evils including untouchability that afflict our society. Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta, MP, who was the Chief guest on the occasion, paid tributes to the memory of Bhagavaanji as a great saint, and further called for measures to ensure that Kashmiri Hindus returned to the valley and lived an honourable life there as before. Shri R.U. Prasad, Secretary (Posts), was also

present on the occasion as a special guest.

The function was presided over by Shri Pushker Nath Kaul, a former Chief Secretary of the J&K Govt. After he delivered his address, Shri Makhan Lal Pandit, President of the Trust, proposed a vote of thanks. Apart from the Guru Vandana offered at the start of the programme, Shri Rajinder Kachru entertained the audience with his *bhajans* that he sang delightfully in his melodious voice, bringing the colourful function to a happy end.

WELCOME ADDRESS

—Pran Nath Koul

Sisters & Brothers, I deem it a proud privilege to extend to all of you a very warm and hearty welcome on behalf of the Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust on this happy occasion of the release of commemorative Postal Stamp to mark Bhagavaanji's Birth Centenary.

Although born in Srinagar, Bhagavaanji turned out to be a blessing not only for the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the country as a whole but for the entire world. Through various kinds of intense spiritual discipline, he rose to be an ocean of spiritual power, on which he drew freely, out of compassion, to help spiritual aspirants to progress on their respective paths, the householders to solve their baffling domestic problems, and the country to face aggression, by directing, in his astral form, our soldiers on the fronts to fire in the correct direction. From among the other instances of his concern for the country, I shall mention only two. Before the USSR exercised its veto power in the UN Security Council for the first time in favour of India, he gave those present before him in Srinagar an idea of the debate as it was progressing, and occasionally, spoke in Russian, a language he had never studied. Assuredly, an indication of his spiritual intervention. More than three years after passing away, he instructed a senior disciple, in his meditation, to offer a particular object as the *aahuti* (oblation) at the Srinagar Ashram. The Bangladesh war was at a critical stage then, and the Indian troops were involved. Immediately after the *aahuti* had been offered, Air broadcast the news, that the enemy troops had surrendered in Dacca.

Here is an instance of Bhgavaanji's concern for harmony and peace in the world. An Australian devotee, Philip Simpfendorfer, while engaged in his meditation in 1978, had a vision of Bhagavaanji and was told by him, "world-harmony depends on a globally interconnected network of light among sacred places and groups of people without regard to nationality or religion."

Bhagavaanji was moved by the suffering of all living things including animals and plants, and, out of compassion for them, brought rain to drought-hit areas.

No wonder, Gopinathji came to be called Bhagavaan in his life-time. Paying his poetic obeisance to him, the national poet, Sumitranandan Pant, mentions him along with Rama, Krishna and Gautama.

Today is Bhagavaanji's hundredth birth anniversary according to the solar Calendar and the Lunar Calendar celebration will take place on 6th July, 1998 in the Ashram premises at Pamposh Enclave, Greater Kailash Part-I, New Delhi. The Birth Centenary has been celebrated at about twenty five places throughout the length and breadth of the country with devotion and dedication. It has also been celebrated in the same spirit in several other countries, including the USA, Australia, Geneva, Londan, Canada. The Mayor of the New Jersey city (USA) called Bhagavaanji an asset not only for Kashmir but the whole world and through a mayoral proclamation, called upon all the citizens to celebrate 26th July, 1997 as the Jagadguru Bhagavaan Gopinathji day with respect and enthusiasm.

Today's august function is a befitting tribute to the year-long celebrations.

Praying to, and meditating on, Bhagavaanji at as many points on earth as possible will go a long way in turning people's minds away from violence and moral corruption. Herein lies the social relevance of the Birth Centenary Celebrations.

Jai Bhagavaan !

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

—Pushkar Nath Kaul

Hon'ble Minister, dear sisters and borthers, we have assembled here to-day to honour and to pay homage to the memory of one who is, and can without doubt be regarded as, a bright star on the firmament of Kashmir's tradition, culture and spirituality. Born a hundred years ago this day Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji relinquished his mortal frame three decades back. However, the sweetness of his soft voice and of his sayings and the fragrance of his being, still actively vibrate in our memory, throb in our hearts, pulsate in every blood vessel of ours and live in our senses which they constantly quicken. The fact that he was born in our community in the land of Sharda has added a lot of respectability to us as a class. He and the other spiritually realised souls like him shine by their own glory and lustre. They leave behind them an everlasting eternal blaze of splendour and brilliance. In truth they are "Gunatit".

It is befitting that by issuing a postage stamp in the name of Bhagavaan Gopinathji, the Government of India and others have come together to honour the saint's memory. A saint, saviour and spiritualist, the Bhagavaan stood, and continues to stand, as a Light House, a milestone, an extraordinary landmark, the very Pole-star for all to benefit and take guidance from. He was what in Sanskrit terminlogy is called an 'Achyut', that is, one who does not get swayed either way by wordly pleasures and pains.

A person of that order does not deviate from his course or fall from his stature. By example and by sermon he cautions human beings against deviating from the correct path. Bhagavaan Gopinathji has become one with the Absolute. He represented the "Praman" the utlimate standard, the true knowledge and proof, in short the whetstone against which ordinary mortals would, and may judge and evaluate their own conduct. He was

an embodiment of compassion and helped individuals, groups and society as a whole without distinction of caste and creed. He shunned publicity and miracles. And yet many of his deeds were no different from miracles. The present is not an occasion, nor does time permit me to narrate details in this behalf.

A pious, holy and realized soul, he belongs to the entire world. His personality cannot be restricted to the confines of a particular time, place or people.

Persons like Bhagavaan Gopinathji transcend the narrow definition and exclusivity of Mind and Matter. In their vision the line dividing the two gets completely obliterated and one can truly exclaim "What is Matter? Never mind; What is Mind? No Matter". They guide one and all the learned aspiring for, and seeking, divine bliss and salvation as well as the laity lost in the fruitless pursuit of the mirages of the day-to-day illusory, transient pleasures leading utlimately to destruction and repeated births and deaths.

The latter category, unfortunately, is the one to which a large percentage of the members of our commuinty can be said to belong at present. We are completely unsettled and in a state of exile and are in consequence on the way to losing most of our traditions, values, style of life, almost all our moorings, our very identity. We are passing through a stage of existence which a poet has bemoaned as under :

> They do not toil and whine about their condition,
> They do not lie awake at night and weep for their sins,
> They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
> Each one is demented with the mania of owning things.

I would make just two points before I conclude. The members of our community should not bid a good-bye to our mother-tongue, Kashmiri, which embodies the sayings and outpourings of our saints and seers and which is a repository of innumerable references to our life and history as Pandits of Kashmir. Who, I pray, will know of Lal-Ded, Rupa-Bhavani,

Arnimal, Nund Rishi, Parmanand, Gwasharam, Habba Khatoon, Rishipeer, Master Zinda Koul and a host of such other people if we forget our mother-tongue? Who will know of "Bebooj Naama", Aknandun, Himal-Nagrai, etc? Divorced from our language and removed from our hearths and homes we will lose the ashes of our fathers and the temples of our Gods that lie in the Valley. All our shrines shall, in such an eventuality, be no better than the Buddha's statue at Bamiyan in Afghanistan, the Angkorvat and Borobondur temples lying in splendid isolation in South East Asian countries as mere reminders of a great but dead civilization.

The need in fact is not only to preserve what is already there but also to unearth what is seemingly lost or unavailable and to have all the writings and sayings printed and reprinted for use by our posterity. About three decades back the Government of India got reprinted in ten volumes a great book titled the *Katha Sarit Sagar* written by one Ram Chandra of Kashmir and translated by some German and English Scholars. The book had gone out of print and was not available for long. In fact the reprint might also have run out of stock. Learned gentlemen present here might know that "Vetaal Pachisi" which is being telecast on all T.V. Channels, forms one volume of the aforementioned book. We should take steps to have other books that are unavailable at present reprinted.

Again, while pursuing our ultimate goal to get ourselves rehabilitated with dignity and honour we should not fall a prey to petty allurements and should not in any manner act so as to catch the shadow and lose the substançe. What in our language is conveyed by the saying ''सऽनदजि दिवान ज़ाऽल्य हय्न्दुॅव्यन्द चॖलान नीरिथ'' "Simple living and high thinking" should be our motto. That will bring our goal within an easy reach.

While concluding his divine sermon, the *Bhagavad Gita*, Bhagavaan Shri Krishna told Arjuna:

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यांत गुह्यादगुह्यतंर मया
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ।

"I have, O Arjuna, revealed to you the ultimate *Dharma* and knowledge, the duty cast on you. Deliberate upon it fully and then act as you like"

(chap XVIII—Sloka 63)

So with us, we have the necessary sermon and guidance before us. May we also in compliance to Bhagavaan Krishna's advice think calmy, coolly and dispassionately and decide what to do. In that alone lies our salvation and thereby we will be paying due respect and homage to Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji also.

हमारे आशीष सम्मेलन से

—प्राण नाथ कौल

भगवन्तं गोपी नाथं शरणं गच्छामि !

आज से पूरे दो वर्ष पूर्व जगत्गुरु भगवान गापीनाथ की जन्म शताब्दी के उपलक्ष्य में एक पूरे वर्ष के कार्यक्रम का नियोजन कर रहे थे। गुरु महाराज के सच्चे भक्तों ने बड़ी लगन तथा श्रद्धा से सौंपे हुए कार्य को निभाया। इसी वर्ष भ्र के कार्यक्रम का आंकलन करने हेतु आज का यह आशीष समारोह आयोजित किया गया है। इन कार्यो में हम सभी एकजुट होकर तन्मयता से लगे रहे। हम सब यहाँ उपस्थित हुए हैं। हमारे महानुभाव, हमारी जनता तथा श्रद्धालु भक्तगण समय पर यहाँ पधारे हैं। इस लम्बे—चोड़े कार्यक्रम में प्रत्येक भक्त ने अपनी—अपनी कलाकृति का प्रमाण दिया है। चाहे वह लेखक हो, कलाकार हो, चित्रकार हो, सेवक हो, प्रेमी हो, उसने इस महायज्ञ में अपने कर्तव्यपालन रूपी आहुति दी है अतः वह शुभफल तथा भगवान जी के शुभ आशीष का अहोभागी है, अधिकारी है। सब इच्छुक श्रद्धालु भक्तों की वही दशा थी जैसे भगवान कृष्ण के चहुँ ओर गोपियाँ घूमती रहती थीं और शुभ मिलन तथा शुभ दर्शन का आनन्द लेती थीं।

पहले चरण में भगवान जी की शोभा यात्रा जम्मू में कश्मीरी पंड़ितों के विस्थापित कैम्पों से आरम्भ हुई। जहाँ पर अत्यन्त वृद्ध तथा असहाय लोगों को शुभ अवसर प्राप्त हुआ और वे वहीं पर दर्शन पाकर कृतार्थ हुए। शोभा यात्रा सारे जम्मू शहर में सराही गई। इसका प्रत्येक स्थान पर जनता ने हार्दिक स्वागत किया।

इसके पश्चात अमेरिका के न्यू जर्सी शहर में एक ऐसा प्रभावशाली समारोह आयोजित हुआ जिसमें भगवान जी ने वहाँ की जनता को जैसे मोह लिया और वहाँ के स्थानीय प्रशासन ने इसे एक सरकारी उत्सव बनाकर वहाँ के लोगों को सौभाग्यशाली बना दिया। लोगों ने इस समारोह की बड़ी सराहना की है।

जेनेवा के औतार जी ने जेनेवा तथा मेनचेस्टर, इंग्लैंड में भी बड़े शानदार समारोह कराये। इस प्रकार वहाँ भी भगवान जी की जयजयकार हुई तथा वे इन समारोहों का आनन्द ले पाए। ये समारोड़ सराहनीय रहे।

इसके अतिरिक्त भगवान जी की जयन्ती शताब्दी समारोह आस्ट्रेलिया, कैनेड़ा, लन्दन और अपने देश भारतवर्ष के लगभग प्रत्येक राज्य में बड़े प्रेम, बड़ी

श्रद्धा तथा हर्षो और उल्लास से मनाये गये।

जम्मू में रक्त दान शिविर, (Blood Donation Camp) महानुभावों की गोष्ठियाँ तथा सतसंग समारोहों का भली–भाँति आयोजन किया गया।

नई दिल्ली में भारत सरकार ने ३ रुपये की भगवान जी की स्मृति डाक टिकट एक भव्य समारोह में जारी की। जो ३ जुलाई, १६६८ ई० अर्थात् आषाढ़ शुकल–पक्ष नवमीं शुक्रवार को भगवान जी के शुभ जन्मदिन के ठीक १०० वर्ष पश्चात हुआ। इसमें श्रद्धालु भक्तजनों की बड़ी संख्या उपस्थित थी। यह समारोह विशेष शोभायमान था।

नई दिल्ली के आश्रम में ही २२ नवम्बर, १६६८ ई० को "Zojila Remembering" का उत्सव मनाया गया जो स्वतंत्रता की पचासवीं वर्षगांठ, उस अदृश्य क्रियाकलाप का था जब भगवान जी ने भारतीय सेनाओं को ज़ोजीला से टैंक लेने में समर्थ कर दिया और इस दिन एक ऐसे कश्मीरी सपूत कर्नल राजदान को भी सम्मानित किया गया जिसने अपनी बहादुरी के जौहर दिखाकर यह प्रमाणित किया कि कश्मीरी पंड़ित दुनिया की किसी भी Martial Race से कम नहीं हैं। यह वही नवजवान फौजी अफसर हैं जिसने १६६४ में श्री अमरनाथ जी की यात्रा को सम्भव बना दिया था तथा जिसने आतंकवादियों के चंगुल से कई असहाय लोगों को मुक्त कर दिया था।

नई दिल्ली में एक शताब्दी प्रवचन के अंतर्गत पंड़ित मक्खन लाल कोकिलू, जो कश्मीर शैव दर्शन पर Authority हैं, ने अपने अध्ययन से प्रमाणित किया है कि भगवान जी परिपूर्ण शैव योगी रहे हैं। उन्हें वह सब कद प्राप्त था जो एक शैव योगी को प्राप्त करना चाहिए। भगवान जी वास्तव में एक अनुपाय साधक थे। क्योंकि अनुपाययों को फिर कुछ करना नहीं पड़ता और इन्हें कोई अधिक स्मरण करने की आवश्यकता नहीं पड़ती। बात स्पष्ट है कि भगवान जी हमें कुछ भी न करते हुए लगते थे। शिव जी के समक्ष बैठे रहते थे। सायुज्य पदवी वाले व्यक्ति भगवान के कक्ष में ही रहते है। वे इस लोक में सब कुछ निहारते रहते हैं। ये तीनों लोकों का अपने आसन पर बैठे–बैठे ही निरीक्षण कर सकते हैं। भूलोक, भुवः लोक, तथा स्वः लोक में विचरण करते हैं।

प्रो. अमरनाथ धर तथा श्री पृथ्वी नाथ कौल "सायिल" की अथाह श्रद्धा तथा लगन के फलस्वरूप पत्रिका के शताब्दी विशेष अंक–२ का पठित तथा पाठक वर्ग ने बड़ी गर्मजोशी से हार्दिक स्वागत किया तथा सराहा है। एक यूनिवर्सिटी

के वाईस चांसलर ने इस पत्रिका को अपने लिए (Souvenir) मान लिया।

२० दिसम्बर, १९९८ को भगवान गोपीनाथ जी ट्रस्ट द्वारा आशीष सम्मेलन, जो उदयवाला बोड़ी जम्मू के आश्रम में आयोजित किया गया था, में पूरे वर्ष के जगत् गुरु भगवान गोपीनाथ जी की जन्म शताब्दी तकरीबात के दौरान भिन्न–भिन्न कार्यो में अपना श्रद्धापूर्वक योगदान देने वाले २८ महानुभावों तथा हितैषियों का स्मृति चिन्ह देकर सम्मान किया गया। ये सभी हमें समय समय पर अपना सहयोग देते रहे हैं, आशा है आगे भी देते रहेंगे। तथास्तु। इस शुभ समारोह तथा सम्मेलन के अध्यक्ष सीनियर ट्रस्टी (Senior Trustee) श्री सी.एल.मोजा तथा पंडित प्रेमनाथ शास्त्री मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में सम्मिलित हुए। मुख्य अतिथि द्वारा जिन महानुभावों को चांदी की प्रतिमा दी गई उनके शुभ नाम इस प्रकार हैं:–

१. प्रो॰ ए. एन. धर २. श्री अवतार कृष्ण कला, ३. श्री अशोक रैणा, ४. श्री अवतार तिकू (जेनेवा), ५. डॉ. बलजी नाथ पंडित, ६. श्री ब्रेट शन्दलर (Mr. Bret Schundler) (Mayor of New Jersey), ७. श्री बी. एन. तिकू (Founder Trustee)] ८. श्री धमप्रिय बी. एस. सहवाल (Chairman, Foundation of Indology & Culture, Ajmer), ६. श्री सी.वी. गोपीनाथ, १०. प्रो॰ सी. एल. गुप्ता (एम.पी), ११. श्री दिलीप लंगू, १२. श्री जगमोहन (Union Minister for Communication), १३. प्रो. जे.एन. शर्मा, १४. श्रीमती कैलाश मेहरा (साधु), १५. श्री मोती लाल (पुष्कर), १६. श्री मनोहर त्रकरू (पत्रकार), १७. श्री एम.एल. कुकिलू, १८. श्री एम. पी.के. कुट्टी, १६. श्री पृथ्वी नाथ कौल "सायिल", २०. श्री फिल्प सिमफेन्दरफर (Philip Simpfendorfer) (Australia), २१. लेफिटिन्नट कर्नल (रिटायर्ड) श्री आर. के. लंगर, २२. श्री एस. डी. रोहमेत्रा (Chief Editor, Daily Excelsior), २३. श्री सुरिन्दर जुतशी, २४. श्रीमती एस.आर. मट्टू (न्यूयॉर्क), २५. श्री टी.के. शिशु, २६. श्रीमती ऊषा रैणा, २७. श्री वी. के. भट्ट तथा २८. श्री विजय मल्ला।

प्रसद्धि कलाकार श्री मल्ला, श्रीमती कैलाश मेहरा, श्री रवि भाण तथा श्री दिलीप लंगू ने भजन गा–गाकर सारा वातावरण आनन्दमय बना दिया।

आशीष सम्मेलन में सम्मिलित होने से हमें एक शुभ अवसर प्राप्त हो रहा है जब हमें श्री भगवान जी के आशीर्वाद का पात्र बनने का सौभाग्य मिल रहा है। सत्‌गुरु तो समर्थ हैं मौज में न जाने कब क्या दे दें।

सदाशिव स्वरूप बोले, शैव दर्शन में वर्णित ३६ तत्वों से भी परे, जगत व्यवहार के साक्षी बने हुए, प्रत्येक प्राणी के हदयस्थित भावों का विशेष रूप से

जानने वाले भगवान गोपीनाथ जी महाराज की सेवा में हमारा शतृशत् प्रणाम हैं।

उन सब कार्यक्रमों के विषय में विस्तारपूर्वक बोलते हुअ सेक्रेटरी ट्रस्ट प्राणनाथ कौल ने जन्म शताब्दी वर्ष के कार्यों का ब्योरा दिया, कार्यों का उललेख किया। इस आशीष सम्मेलन में उपस्थित महानुभावों, महिला वर्ग, श्रद्धालु भक्तजनों का हार्दिक स्वागत करते हुए ट्रस्ट के प्रधान श्रीमती जया किशोरी पटवारी ने श्रद्धापूर्ण सेवावों के लिए सभी सेवकों का धन्यवाद किया।

From the President, Bhagavaan Gopinathji Trust: CONCLUDING REMARKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a matter of immense satisfaction that through the dedicated efforts of all concerned—writers and scholars as the contributors, and the team of workers involved in compiling/editing the materials—we have been able to bring out this commemorative volume. In a befitting way, it throws light on Bhagavaanji's multi-facted personality, his eminence as the "saint of all time" and his vital link with what constitutes our great spiritual heritage. Truly speaking, among the various bounties of the Bhagavaan's year-long birth centenary celebration, which was crowded with many memorable programmes and events, the present volume is a prized possession for us and our posterity. It comes as a fitting sequel to the earlier publications of the Trust, including the biographical materials on Bhagavaanji and the various issues of the *Patrika* (by now a standard religio-cultural journal of the Trust brought out biannually). We are pleased to place this volume in the hands of our readers across the globe.

In retrospect, we feel beholden to all those devoted workers who contributed to the successful celebration of the Bhagavaan's birth centenary. We are equally grateful to the Governmental and other agencies (in the country and elsewhere) that came forward and rendered valuable services on all important occasions.

The names of some workers did receive publicity through media coverage in view of their prominent participation in the events and programmes; we also acknowledge our gratitude here to a lot many others who remained quietly and deeply involved throughout in the background. All of them deserve the Bhagavaan's blessings in an equal measure.

Let us hope, with the grace of Bhagavaanji, we will not only sustain the present tempo of our programmes and publications but intensify it further in the years to come.

Jai Kishori Pathwari

Thus Spake Bhagavaan Ji

- All that exists is God incarnate (viraat) and Om is its root. Om pervades everything. Nothing is possible without it.
- Meditating on Om means being wholly rid of the ego. Only then is self-realisation possible.
- One can realise the Self by discretion.
- One's Own hard work and the Guru's grace are both very essential to god-realisation.
- If, after studying all the four Vedas and the Shastras, one does not act upon what one has gathered from them and is bereft of the Guru's grace, all one's study only exhausts and goes waste.
- He will boldly cross the ocean of maayaa who, though seemingly attached to the world, has given up all wordly desires and ambitions.
- Where is the way for spiritual advancement as long as there is lust?
- Think of Brahman as a tree and sit on any one of its branches (representing Shiva, Naaraayana, etc.). The same goal will be reached in each case.
- It is an indication of God's grace if one surrenders at the feet of one's guru.
- "Amar Chhaa Maraan"
  —Does what's immortal die?

All the publications of the Trust can be had from Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Ashrams;

**a) Pamposh Enclave, G.K.-1,
New Delhi-110 048. Phone: 6216368**

**b) Bohri, Udaiwala Road,
Jammu-180 002. Phone: 555775**

Bhagavaan Gopinathji Birth Centenary Volume : OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE